

Pro-PLO candidates win West Bank poll

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Pro-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) candidates swept a chamber of commerce election in the occupied West Bank after Islamic fundamentalists withdrew from the race, Palestinian sources said Friday. The results of the poll conducted Thursday in the town of Jenin showed businessmen affiliated with the PLO's mainstream Fatah organisation took all nine contested seats. Those aligned with the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) pulled out of the election saying the PLO had peddled votes. Israeli sources said Hamas withdrew because it feared major defeat in the Fatah stronghold. Four independent candidates also contested the elections. Professional and chamber of commerce elections have become a barometer of the strength of rival groups in the occupied territories. About 60 per cent of 2,000 registered voters cast ballots in Thursday's Jenin elections.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان نيوز يومية سياسية مستقلة بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الرأي

Russia, U.S. lift travel blocks

MOSCOW (R) — Moscow and Washington swept away one of the last cold war relics Friday by granting freedom of travel to journalists and business representatives working in each other's countries. ITAR-TASS news agency said all restrictions in movement had been lifted immediately under an "open land" memorandum signed in June during President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Washington. "The Russian side looks on this agreement as yet another important step in the implementation of the open land memorandum... and confirms its readiness to continue working on this with its American partners," TASS said. American correspondents and businessmen can now travel anywhere in Russia, except for military zones closed even to Russians. "I think it's a wonderfully representative move in dismantling the last piece of information control machinery dating from the cold war," said a senior U.S. newspaper correspondent with six years' Moscow experience. For decades all foreigners had to apply to the Soviet foreign ministry 24 hours in advance to travel anywhere beyond 30 kilometres outside Moscow.

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Israel's population grows by 3 per cent

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel's population grew three per cent to 5,155,000 in the past year, mainly due to the arrival of tens of thousands of Soviet Jewish immigrants, the bureau of statistics said Friday. But the rate of increase for Israel's population during the year was less than half of 1991's 6.3 per cent. Lack of housing and jobs for the immigrants have been the main reasons the three-year wave of immigration appears to have waned. The report was published to mark the Jewish New Year, which begins Sunday night. Of the total, 4.2 million are Jews (81.9 per cent), 715,000 Muslims (13.9 per cent), 135,000 Christians (2.4 per cent), and 86,000 Druze (1.7 per cent). The Druze are an offshoot sect of Islam. Israel's population grew by 150,000 since last September, with 92,000 immigrants providing almost two-thirds of that number. Some 225,000 immigrants had come in the previous year.

Fadallah demands Israel free detainees

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's most influential pro-Iranian Muslim cleric said Friday the world must not be allowed to forget hundreds of Arab prisoners held by Israel. Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Fadallah, spiritual mentor of Hizbollah (Party of God), made the remarks three days after Israel demanded more information from Lebanon over the fate of a missing soldier. "To all those holding the captives... we want the captives and prisoners to be freed," he said at prayers in a Beirut mosque. Israel and its militia ally, the South Lebanon Army, are holding some 250 Arabs who could be part of exchange involving four Israeli servicemen and eight SLA members missing in Lebanon. Of the Israelis, only a navigator shot down over Lebanon in 1986 is believed to be alive.

Tunisia releases Jews

PARIS (R) — Tunisia has marked a visit by France's chief rabbi by releasing from prison two Tunisian Jews, including a 14-year-old held for murder, a French television station said Friday. Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk this week paid his first visit to his native Tunisia since he left at the age of 15. France-2 television showed Tunisia's President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali receiving Rabbi Sitruk at his palace.

UNESCO awards prize to Arab group

PARIS (R) — The Tunis-based Arab Institute for Human Rights (IAHD) has been awarded UNESCO's 1992 prize for the teaching of human rights, the U.N. organisation said Friday. The Paris-based United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation said in a statement IAHD was chosen "in recognition of its efforts in training teachers, lawyers, magistrates, trade unionists, police and prison personnel."

U.S. launches probe to explore Mars

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (R) — A Titan rocket blasted off Friday carrying an unmanned spacecraft on the first U.S. mission to Mars in 17 years. The Mars Observer spacecraft's three-year, \$891 million mission will gather data on the red planet's geology and climate in preparation for future human exploration. The rocket blasted off at 1:05 p.m. EDT (1705 GMT). After an 11-month, 725-million kilometre journey, the Mars observer will circle the planet's poles for 887 Earth days — a full Martian year. Scientists will use the information it gathers to choose landing sites for human expeditions in the next century.

Gunmen kill two Algerian gendarmes

ALGIERS (R) — Two Algerian gendarmes were shot dead east of the capital, bringing to three the number of members of the paramilitary force killed in three days. Algiers Radio said Friday the two men, on leave from barracks, were gunned down late Thursday night, "surprised in their car by bursts of gunfire from automatic weapons." Their killers fled in a car.

U.S. election may delay progress in Mideast talks

Combined agency dispatches

JUST WHEN it seemed as if Middle East peace talks might be getting somewhere, history has thrown the 1992 U.S. presidential election in their path. The result, especially if Democrat Bill Clinton wins, may be several more weeks or even months of marking time before Arabs and Israelis can resume serious work on a breakthrough.

Israel, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and the Palestinians ended a sixth round of talks Thursday, having established a positive atmosphere and shown signs that real progress may be possible. "From now until the end of the year, the next round will see more atmospherics and possibly a little movement, but not much," he said.

While a Bush election victory is likely to be followed by a renewed push for Middle East peace, a change of administration is certainly not expected to derail the process. Mr. Clinton has promised to pursue it vigorously, telling a Jewish audience last month there would be no delays. But a new administration would not take office until Jan. 20 and would presumably need some time to put a new foreign policy team in place. Senior officials would need time to be confirmed by the Senate, to familiarise themselves with policy nuances and to meet the key Middle East players.

Former Secretary of State James Baker spent over two years painfully winning the confidence of all parties to the conflict. He had countless meetings with Syria's President Hafez Al Assad before finally persuading him to enter peace talks with Israel for the first time.

Under different circumstances, Mr. Baker might now be climbing back on his plane to the Middle

East and using his unparalleled position to push for real concessions.

But he is back at the White House, trying to get Mr. Bush reelected, and nobody else in the administration has the stature and clout to do the peace mediation job.

In Middle East terms, a five-or six-month delay is not long. But a window of opportunity may be opening — a once-in-a-lifetime chance to make peace.

"We are not yet at a point in the negotiations where the United States feels it has or wants to step in, but it's getting there, it's getting close," said Barry Rubin of Johns Hopkins University.

Most observers believe Arabs and Israelis will be unable to make peace on their own. They will need powerful, adroit and sustained U.S. mediation to make the needed concessions.

Mr. Baker wanted to be the man to bring peace to the Middle East. But history may yet offer the task to someone else. Jordan said Thursday its talks with Israel had failed to produce agreement on a common agenda. "We have still not been able to agree on a common agenda between us... despite a very serious attempt on our part to achieve the goal in this round," spokesman Marwan Muehsen said.

The two sides are near agreement on language regarding the comprehensiveness of the settlement and on water. We also have managed to include one critical dimension of the refugee problem as it pertains to the security issue. However, the two sides are still in disagreement over language on major issues. These include the refugee problem, Israeli

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Celebrations continue all over Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein spent the day resting Friday, one day after his return to a tumultuous welcome following successful surgery and recuperation abroad.

An estimated one million Jordanians — nearly one third of the Kingdom's population — crowded Amman streets to express their joy over the success of the King's surgery and his recovery from illness and return home.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported that the King had received messages of congratulations and wishes of good health while Jordan Television (JTV) and Radio reported continued celebrations all over the Kingdom.

JTV correspondents reported from the various governorates that celebrations continued late into the night Thursday and resumed Friday.

The celebrations included singing and dancing and recital of poetry paying tribute to the King and thanking God for his recovery.

Petra quoted a cable from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein as expressing happiness over the King's return and wishing him good health. The cable wished the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity.

A cable from the mayor of Jerusalem, Rawhi Al Khatib, to Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki congratulated the Hashemite Family and the government and people of Jordan on the recovery of the King and his return home "to pursue his untiring efforts to unify Arab and Islamic folds," Petra said.

Also sending congratulatory cables to the King were Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Fathi Abu Taleh, General Intelligence Department Director-General Lieutenant-General Mustafa Al Qasbi, Civil Defence Department Director-General Major General Afif Al Ghoul and Public Security Director-General Major General Fadel Ali Fheid.



French franc rides high, stock markets weak

LONDON (R) — The French franc, under determined assault from speculators earlier in the week, rode high Friday at its best levels since Europe's currency turmoil erupted.

It traded at 3.3800 per mark at the end of the European day, stronger than Thursday's late 3.3965.

This took it safely away from its floor in the European Community's exchange rate mechanism (ERM) of 3.4005 per mark, a level which speculators had been attacking for a week.

"At the moment it looks like the French have got away with it," said Keith Edmunds, international economist at Natwest Treasury and Capital Markets.

But the pound hit new lows against the mark and traded at 2.5417 marks in late afternoon business in London.

Speculators put huge pressure on the franc after forcing Britain and Italy last week to quit the ERM and let their currencies

drop. But resolute action by Germany, whose central bank acted in unison with the Bank of France to defend the franc, meant the franc escaped the same fate.

There seemed little immediate danger Friday of any further unravelling of the ERM.

Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds said he had no plans to take Ireland out of the currency grid. Mr. Reynolds, speaking in London after talks with British Prime Minister John Major, said ERM membership had been good for Ireland.

But the future of the EC's grand for monetary union by the end of the century still looked clouded and this unsettled some markets.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl denied that EC was headed for a two-speed union, after several leading European had floated this idea.

Members of German Finance Minister Theo Waigel's party quoted him as saying the EC

would have to consider developing at different speeds in future.

They said Mr. Waigel told a meeting of his Christian Social Union that Germany, France, the Benelux states (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) and Denmark looked most likely to fulfil conditions for a common monetary policy.

Belgian Central Bank Governor Alfons Verplaetse said that a five-country monetary union in the EC could begin at once.

"Germany, France and the Benelux countries could start immediately," Mr. Verplaetse told Belgian radio.

Looking back over a tumultuous week, some dealers expressed satisfaction that the franc had not buckled.

"If the market had broken the franc for no real cause, there would have been great pressure in the central banks to curb the forex markets with rules and red tape," said a U.S. bank dealer in London.

European stock markets were generally weak.

London, which has romped ahead since Britain left the ERM, last week and cut interest rates, eased back Friday. The Financial Times-Stock Exchange of 100 top shares fell 20.2 points to 2,601.

In Frankfurt, the 30-share Dax index ended 17.58 points lower at 1,513.36. Dealers said the currency turmoil was hitting stock prices and the index has lost nearly 76 points in a week.

The Paris Bourse was curbed by the high cost of near-term money — one of France's weapons against currency speculators — and by a string of lacklustre interim earnings. The CAC-40 index swung wildly before finishing 14.03 points higher at 1,843.53.

Policymakers end tense week; Major wants ERM reforms, page 7

Critics of Maastricht see multi-track Europe, page 8

Iraq denounces U.S. plan to seize its frozen assets

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq said Friday a U.S. plan to have the United Nations seize Iraqi assets frozen abroad was a crime against the Iraqi people and would deprive infants of baby milk which the government imports from abroad.

Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh said the plan, now at the informal discussion stage in New York, would also hit other commodities in a government rationing scheme set up to minimise the effects of U.N. sanctions.

The United States is putting out its hand to hijack our assets in different countries. It is a crime against Iraqi children," he told a news conference.

"The action of confiscating our frozen assets in different countries will lead to more human suffering and increase child mortality," he added. "The United States is waging a war of mass destruction of human life in Iraq."

The plan, in the form of a Security Council resolution drafted by the United States, would give some of the frozen assets to the United Nations to pay for U.N. weapons inspectors and humanitarian aid to Kurds and other Iraqis.

But Mr. Saleh said the rationing system included Iraqis in areas held by Kurdish rebels and denied Baghdad was withholding fuel from the Kurdish north.

"Without our food, the people there (in Kurdistan) will go hungry," he said.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Said Al Sahaf, speaking in New York, also denounced the U.S. plan saying it would undo many commercial contracts for food and medical supplies.

It was not immediately clear how Iraq was signing contracts on the basis of assets which it cannot touch.

Mr. Saleh said that if the assets were frozen, Iraq would not be able to maintain the subsidised milk powder ration for babies up to one year old, the only category which is eligible.

He said that once the United Nations lifted the ban on Iraqi oil sales, the country would avoid selling in U.S. dollars and would deposit the money in banks outside the United States.

U.S. banks hold about one third of the \$3.7 billion Iraq says it has in deposits abroad.

Asked what Iraq would do if the Security Council approved the draft, Mr. Saleh said: "What can we do? If (the money) is in their hand, in their system, they can do what they would like."

On Thursday, the Security Council carried out its periodic review of sanctions against Iraq and to no one's surprise left the economic embargo intact.

An nearly identical statement to the one issued on July 27 was read to reporters by council President Jose Ayala Lasso of Ecuador.

It said that "after hearing all the opinions expressed in the course of the consultations, the president of the council concluded that there still was no agreement that the necessary conditions existed for a modification of the regime."

The council has done nothing to ease the wide-ranging curbs after each 60 day review, conducted behind closed doors.

Reports from the U.N. said meanwhile the United States had stopped trying to go after all Iraqi assets abroad and is now asking the United Nations to seize only oil money frozen after Baghdad invaded Kuwait.

The money would be used to

pay for teams monitoring the destruction of Iraq's weapons programmes and for aid to dissidents in Iraq.

It is not clear how much money is involved. Two sources are being discussed: Iraqi bank accounts abroad — which would consist mainly of proceeds from oil sales — and money owed Iraq for oil delivered before the United Nations banned oil trade with Baghdad after the August 1990 invasion.

French Ambassador Jean-Bernard Merimee predicted roughly \$300 million would be seized, but another Western diplomat pegged the estimate at up to \$1 billion.

Confiscation of oil revenues would be the latest example of U.N. action against Iraq.

When the United States began considering confiscation in the spring, it wanted the United Nations to seize all Iraqi assets abroad, but legal and political problems forced Washington to lower its sights.

Several other members of the Security Council were concerned that wholesale seizure would set a dangerous precedent and undermine investors' confidence in the security of deposits.

Some diplomats were concerned the U.N. resolution would conflict with national laws requiring court action to seize bank accounts. By limiting confiscation to oil revenues, the resolution is less threatening.

The seizure as originally envisioned would have affected several billion dollars in currency and gold Iraq kept in the United States, Europe, South America

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Destruction of nerve gas begins, page 2

Iraqi dissidents plan a provisional government

ANKARA (Agencies) — Iraqi dissidents, meeting in Kurdish-held northern Iraq Friday, may move towards setting up a provisional government, Kurdish officials said.

Kurdish guerrilla chiefs Masoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani took turns in the chair as 18 delegates representing a broad spectrum of Iraqi opposition groups met for a second day in the resort town of Salabuddin, 25 kilometres northeast of Irbil.

Safeen Dizayee, Ankara spokesman for the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), said the conference, the first on Iraqi soil, aimed to prepare for a high-level gathering within four weeks.

That meeting would "choose a representative body and possibly even set up a caretaker government," he said.

Witnesses said Kurdish Feshmarga guerrillas armed with Kalashnikov rifles provided tight security at the KDP guesthouse in Salabuddin, where the conference began Thursday.

Delegates turned up in motley garb, ranging from Arab robes and headscarves to military uniforms and business suits.

Reflecting Iraq's ethnic and religious mix, they include Sunni and Shiite Muslim Arabs, Kurds, Turkomans and Assyrians.

Mr. Serchil Gazzaz, Ankara representative of Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), said Kurdish groups believed any provisional government should be set up in northern Iraq, controlled by Kurds helped by Western military air cover.

Symbols abound — and fall down — during peace talks

By Ruth Sinai
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The briefing room was so quiet you could hear a pin drop. Or a Syrian flag.

The flag and its platform topped forward one day this week as a senior Syrian diplomat was describing the latest peace talks with Israel. The flag and stand landed with a thud at the feet of an Israeli reporter.

The reporter righted the flag, prompting a Syrian journalist to suggest that one day soon the Israelis would raise a Syrian flag on the Golan Heights.

"That would be very good, very good indeed," said Syria's Bushra Kanafani, to the sound of general laughter.

While that scenario appears far-fetched, Israel and Syria — bitter enemies that have fought four wars in 44 years — did not rule out a peace agreement as they concluded their sixth round of talks Thursday.

"This round has proven... that peace is possible between Israel and the Arab World, and that this historic opportunity should not be wasted," Syria's chief delegate Muwaffaq Al-Ali said.

The talks will resume Oct. 21. They include the Israeli-Syrian talks, as well as those between Israel and Lebanon, Israel and Jordan and Israel and Palestinians.

"We believe the parties have achieved a good foundation for future progress," U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerejian said.

The United States has served as a sounding board during the talks, meeting regularly with the delegations and offering suggestions when asked. It also has served as a channel for messages.

Mr. Djerejian said he had conveyed to Israel the gist of remarks made Wednesday in New York by Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al-Sharaa to U.S. acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger. He declined to describe the communication further.

"There was a different and more cordial tone between the parties," he told reporters, summing up this round. "The parties are definitely grappling with the tough key issues of territory, peace and security."

On the issue of territory, Israel continued to reject Syria's demand that it withdraw from the Golan. Israel insisted that before it can discuss withdrawal it must know what kind of peace Syria will offer in return.

Nonetheless, Israel promised to bring back new language next time to help unlock the impasse on this point.

"We really believe the ball is now in Israel's field," said Mr. Ali. "The New Israeli government must have the courage to seize the moment."

The Palestinians also expressed hope that Israel would return with a different attitude and new ideas — saying that so far they had heard nothing from Israel's left-leaning government that they had not heard from its right-wing predecessor.

"We think that this allowed both sides to understand more the complexities of the issues presented, the concerns of both sides," Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said.

But, she added, Israel must demonstrate its sincerity by alleviating the suffering of Palestinians under military occupation, by ending such punitive practices as demolishing homes, by freeing prisoners, relaxing searches and allowing free use of land and water.

Israel, for its part, offered a detailed blueprint that would give Palestinians control over their police, courts, taxes, roads, education and other aspects of daily life. It also would provide for general elections to pick administrators of the self-governing authority.

Israel also promised that in the third year of self-government, talks would start to determine the fate of the West Bank and Gaza Strip — talks on U.N. Resolution 242 that calls for Israel to cede land in return for peace.

U.S. accuses Sudan of destroying entire tribe

WASHINGTON (R) — A senior U.S. official Thursday accused Sudan's Islamic fundamentalist government of deliberately destroying a Christian tribe through forcible displacement, religious persecution and slow starvation.

Andrew Natsios, assistant administrator for food and humanitarian assistance at the U.S. Agency for International Development, said the Khartoum government was engaged in a campaign of "ethnic cleansing" against the Nuba tribe which lives in the Nuba mountains of central Sudan.

The authorities were forcibly shifting the tribe to the region of northern Kordofan hundreds of kilometres away, he said.

"They're doing it to destroy their culture and demoralize them. We had a direct report from one of my staff. This is not a second-hand report," Mr. Natsios told Reuters in an interview.

He asserted that the campaign against the Nuba was part of a wider policy of eradicating African culture in southern Sudan and forcing the population to accept Islam.

"This is part of a scheme which has been very carefully orchestrated by the government for the entire south," he said.

Sudan is a huge country situated north of Zaire and south of Egypt. Its northern population, which dominates the country, is mainly Arab and Muslim, while the southerners are black Africans and worship Christianity or tribal religions.

Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Herman Cohen told a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Wednesday the Islamic government was trying to remove all opposition and was forcing non-Muslim Africans in the southern part of the country to become Muslims.

"I'm really deeply worried about the fate of the people of southern Sudan," Mr. Cohen said.

The full-scale destruction of Iraq's stockpile of nerve gas began Thursday as U.N. weapons experts disposed of a third of a tonne of the deadly agent sarin, U.N. officials said.

The nerve agent was destroyed in a hydrolysis unit built by the Iraqis under U.N. supervision at their chemical weapons arsenal at Muthanna, 100 kilometres north-west of Baghdad.

The chief inspector, Garth Whitty, said that the first day's operations went without a hitch, said Tim Trevan, spokesman for the U.N. special commission that is dismantling Iraq's weapon programmes.

He said the U.N. team plans to "continue such destruction on a daily basis" and to increase productivity as they and their Iraqi counterparts gain experience.

Under the ceasefire agreement ending the Gulf war, Iraq is obliged to cooperate with U.N. inspectors in eliminating its nuclear, biological and chemical weapons programmes as well as long-range missiles.

"By a combination of continuous air monitoring and sample-taking and analysis, the team was able to ensure that the agent was thoroughly destroyed and that there was no contamination of the surrounding environment," he said.

The hydrolysis plant uses water to convert the agent to non-toxic salts.

A team of up to 30 disposal specialists are stationed in Iraq permanently for the six to 18 months it should take to destroy the chemical stockpile.

About 70 tonnes of nerve agent and 400 tonnes of mustard gas await destruction at Muthanna, U.N. experts say.

That represents what was in storage when the Gulf war ended in February 1991, as well as the amounts put into bulk storage tanks from a few of the nerve agent bombs and half the total mustard bombs already dismantled.

World Food Programme cost it about \$7,200 a flight, Mr. Mitchell said. He said Southern Air Transport "is one of the few Hercules outfits worldwide that will go into combat situations."

The operational differences between the civilian Southern Air Transport crews and the military crews flying the American C-130s are striking.

The chartered Hercules carry more tonnes of cargo per flight, including combustible fuel for power generators and ground transportation that U.S. military planes refuse to haul. German planes transport fuel.

When the chartered planes land on one of the dirt strips that serve many Somali towns, their flight crews turn off the engines, getting out to chat with aid workers while they are being unloaded.

The Americans land, keep their engines running for a quick getaway and do not get out of their planes while Somali workers toil in the wash of their four giant propellers.

There is a view that the Hercules should normally carry about 18 metric tonnes and the Americans are only carrying nine metric tonnes, said Mike McDanna, field director for Irish Concern in Somalia.

"I don't think the actual pilots are tired," Mr. McDanna said. "Obviously, it's a department of defence policy."

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

U.S., Israel to cooperate in Dotan probe

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States and Israel agreed Thursday to cooperate further in the investigation involving ex-Israeli air force General Ramon Dotan, who pleaded guilty to skimming millions of dollars in U.S. military aid to Israel. "The discussions were constructive and produced a framework for further cooperation," according to a joint statement issued by the Israeli embassy after two days of talks with U.S. officials. It said senior officials of the two countries met on Tuesday and Wednesday to discuss "ongoing cooperation in the investigation of the Dotan affair." The two-sentence statement gave no further details. Gen. Dotan pleaded guilty in 1991 to fraud and bribery charges in the case, which has deeply embarrassed the Israeli military. He received a 13-year prison sentence. The U.S. Justice Department then launched a criminal investigation into whether any General Electric Co. employees had bribed Dotan or other Israeli officials in the deals involving the sale of military jet engines to Israel. In July, General Electric pleaded guilty in a federal court in Cincinnati, Ohio, to charges of fraud, money laundering and corrupt business practices over the sales from 1984-90. But the U.S. Justice and Defense departments have complained that Israel has refused to cooperate fully with the investigation. And Congressman John Dingell, whose subcommittee has been conducting its own investigation into the affair, has charged that the Israeli government "stonewalled" the probe. A Justice Department spokesman was unavailable for comment on the talks with Israel.

Rebels kill Turk officer, two soldiers

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey (R) — A Turkish colonel and two soldiers were killed by Kurdish rebels in a machinegun and rocket ambush in southeast Turkey, officials said Friday. They said battalion commander Lieutenant-Colonel Muammer Yuzursen was returning from Cizre town after inspecting military units there when he ran into a rebel road block near Idil on Thursday night. The rebels of the Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) then blasted two vehicles carrying the soldiers with rocket and machinegun fire, killing the three. Twelve PKK rebels and eight Turkish soldiers were reported killed in a two-day battle which ended earlier Thursday in the eastern Turkish province of Bitlis. More than 4,800 people have been killed since 1984 when the PKK launched a violent independence war for Kurds in Turkey.

PLO sentences 3 Abu Nidal guerrillas to death

SIDON, Lebanon (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in South Lebanon has sentenced three radical Palestinian guerrillas to death for first degree murder, security sources said Friday. The guerrillas — Ayman Hamoud, Munir Al-Haj and Rifa' Abu Nidal's Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC) — were tried in public by a PLO military tribunal at "Ain Al-Fil" refugee camp east of Sidon, they said. Rifa' was sentenced to death. It was the first public trial conducted by the PLO in Lebanon since government troops defeated armed Palestinians in the refugee camps in the south last year, the sources said. The sources said the court, passing sentence Thursday, ordered the three men shot dead. No date was set for the executions, which need the approval of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. They said the court found them guilty of killing Palestinian civilians in the camp but gave no other details. Several Palestinian guerrillas have been killed in the south since last year in a power struggle between the FRC and the mainstream PLO group Fatah. The victims include the Fatah commander in Lebanon, Lieutenant-Colonel Anwar Madi, and top FRC official Walid Khalid. Abu Nidal split from Fatah in 1973. Two other FRC guerrillas were sentenced to 10 years and five years in prison for attempted murder, the sources added. Under Lebanese law, the PLO cannot hold trials in the country but in practice it has tried people inside the camps, sometimes in secret, the sources said. The newspaper Al-Naba' quoted a Fatah security official, Lieutenant-Colonel Munir Maqad, as saying his group held 62 FRC guerrillas on charges of murder or sabotage. One FRC guerrilla was seriously wounded Thursday in a bomb attack in Sidon and gunmen killed a Fatah officer on Wednesday in the port city, 40 kilometres south of Beirut.

Morocco gets 'Orson Welles Square'

AL SAOUIRA, Morocco (AP) — A public square was renamed Thursday after filmmaker Orson Welles, who filmed his classic "Othello" in this North African city four decades ago. Crown Prince Sidi Mohammed inaugurated Orson Welles Square in this city in southern Morocco amid a festival marking the 40th anniversary of the movie. Andre Azoulay, an economic councillor to King Hassan II — and who appeared in the film itself — paid homage to the renowned director. Welles' daughter Beatrice, said in emotional remarks that she was honoured to be in Al Saouira and said her father cherished the time he spent here.

Iran appoints new chief of law-and-order forces

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's spiritual leader has appointed Brigadier General Reza Seifollahi as commander in chief of law-and-order forces, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said. The agency reported late Thursday that Ayatollah Ali Khamenei put Gen. Seifollahi in charge of all the nation's disciplinary forces — police, drug enforcement and other forces pertaining to "state security." Gen. Seifollahi was a deputy interior minister in charge of the anti-drug trafficking campaign, in which hundreds of smugglers have been executed or jailed. Earlier, he was commander in chief of the Revolutionary Guards in the central Isfahan province during the 1980-88 war with Iraq. He is in his late 30s. The largest Iranian exile opposition group, Mujahadeen-e-Khalq, claimed that the appointment of Gen. Seifollahi to his new post was part of a clampdown on growing opposition to the government. The group, in a telegram from its office in Paris, claimed that Gen. Seifollahi was one of the "students" involved in the seizure of 52 Americans held hostage at the U.S. embassy in Tehran in 1980. It said after his war service, he was transferred to the guards headquarters in Tehran where he "played an active role in the massacre of political prisoners" in mid-1988. The claims could not be confirmed.

New U.N. commander arrives in Sahara

RABAT (R) — Belgian Colonel Andre van Baelen arrived in the Western Saharan town of Laayoun Thursday to take over as interim commander of the U.N. peace-keeping force in the former Spanish colony, the official news agency MAP said. Gen. Van Baelen takes over on Oct. 1 from Brigadier General Luis Block Urban of Peru who has been in command since April when he took over from General Armand Roy of Canada. The U.N.'s Minurso mission has been monitoring a ceasefire in the disputed territory for just over a year prior to holding a self-determination referendum to decide its future. The referendum originally due last January has been stalled by a dispute between Polisario "guerrillas" fighting for independence since 1976 and Morocco which claims the area is an integral part of the kingdom. The two sides are unable to agree on who is eligible to vote in the plebiscite. The U.N. has been trying to break the deadlock at meetings with each side in New York but no new date for the referendum has been announced yet.

Kuwait lends Lebanon \$50 m for telephone

BEIRUT (AP) — Kuwait has agreed to extend a \$50-million soft loan to repair the Lebanese telephone system that was devastated by 15 years of civil war. Defence and Telecommunications Minister Michel Murr said Thursday. The loan will be made available by Kuwait Bank and the Islamic Bank, Mr. Murr told newsmen after meeting with Kuwaiti Ambassador Ahmad Abdul Aziz Al-Jassem. Lebanon sustained an estimated \$25 billion in material losses during the 1976-1990 civil war, according to U.N. experts. At least \$3 billion are needed to begin the reconstruction of Beirut and its environs. But despite two years of fragile peace, fewer than \$500 million have been pledged and less than \$250 million have been made available. The lack of reconstruction funds fuelled the country's worst ever economic crisis which saw the Lebanese pound plummeting to 2,600 to the U.S. dollar. It was 2.5 to the dollar before the outbreak of the civil war.

Black Hebrews get Israeli citizenship

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel granted its community of Black Hebrews temporary resident status Thursday, the first step to citizenship for the controversial group which began in Chicago in the 1960s. The move, announced in an interior ministry communiqué, ended two decades of tension between the group and Israeli authorities. "We're very happy with the news," said Black Hebrew spokeswoman Yadah Baht-Israel. The Black Hebrews arrived in Israel from Chicago in the early 1970s, claiming to be the true descendants of the biblical tribes of Israel. Today they number about 1,300. The group is led by Ben Ami Carter. They entered Israel on tourist visas and renounced their American citizenship in an effort to be accepted under Israel's "law of return" which grants automatic citizenship to Jews and recognized converts to Judaism. Israel does not recognise the Black Hebrews as Jews. And the interior ministry consistently has refused to grant them citizenship through channels open to non-Jews, saying the group had entered the country under false pretences.

Turkey moves to ban unlicensed radio channels

ANKARA (R) — Turkey has moved to ban more than 10 unlicensed private radio stations operating in Istanbul, Transport Minister Yasar Topcu said. The stations, mostly transmitting music on unauthorised FM frequencies, were interfering with vital communication lines, Mr. Topcu told Anatolia news agency. He said the ministry had asked the Istanbul prosecutor's office to ban the broadcasts. "There will be chaos if people decide to go on the air as they like. These transmissions interfere with communications of Istanbul airport, naval, coast guard and police communications, creating danger," Turkish laws protect a state monopoly on radio and television broadcasts and private transmissions can be made only on licensed frequencies. The monopoly has been effectively broken in the last two years by at least five private television networks that beam from European cities via satellite.

Father ordered to retrieve son from Iran

PORTLAND (AP) — A judge has ordered Mohammad Afshereh to go to Iran and retrieve his three-year-old son or face a jail term for contempt. Multnomah County District Court Judge Elizabeth Welch made the order during Mr. Afshereh's divorce proceedings from his wife, Halimeh Sedghi-Loukaleh. Ms. Sedghi-Loukaleh had said the judge she wants her Oregon-born son in the United States even though her husband was granted temporary custody by another judge. "At least I could see him," she said. "He needs to see both of his parents." Ms. Sedghi-Loukaleh left the son, Amin Afshereh, in Iran after a visit because she did not have the boy's birth certificate. Her husband's father then got guardianship from Iranian court. The couple and their son had returned to Iran in 1991, but Mr. Afshereh, in accordance with Iranian law, cancelled permission for his wife to leave the country and returned to Portland alone. Ms. Sedghi-Loukaleh managed to leave Iran anyway.

Israel reopens mission in Nigeria

LAGOS (R) — Israel has reopened a diplomatic mission in Nigeria after a 19-year break following the restoration of full ties in May. "We attach great importance to the normalisation of relations with the most populous African country," Israeli Ambassador Moshe Gilboa told Reuters Friday. Mr. Gilboa, who presented his credentials to military President Ibrahim Babangida Thursday, said "I had initially would study possible oil, cocoa and coal purchases from Nigeria. He said Israel was interested in selling technical know-how in aircraft, chemical, food, medical, communication and other fields."

Afghan president arrives in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (R) — Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani arrived Friday in Peshawar, capital of North-West Frontier Province, for his first official visit to Pakistan. Mr. Rabbani will travel to Islamabad Saturday for the formal start of a two-day official visit. The Afghan president, accompanied by Deputy Foreign Minister Najibullah Lafie, is scheduled to meet President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

U.S. 'over-cautious' in Somalia foodlift

By Reid G. Miller
The Associated Press

NAIROBI — The U.S. military airlift of food to starving people in Somalia, begun a month ago with great fanfare, is proving disappointing to some international aid officials.

They have accused the Americans of being overcautious about flying to unstable areas, unnecessarily slowing the delivery of vital food, medicine and other supplies.

Some members of the U.S. Congress also have called for a more active U.S. military role in Somalia, where more than 100,000 people already have died from war and starvation.

Two million more are critically at risk, and aid officials say up to 500,000 people could die by the end of the year unless food and medical aid gets to them first.

Many private aid workers are angry and frustrated with the pace of the relief effort, which has been bedeviled by marauding gunmen and transportation delays. Exhausted by the sight of children, mothers and the elderly dying every day, they have looked out in many directions, including at each other — and recently, the U.S. airlift.

Such criticism, however, draws a sharp response from Washington. "This airlift has saved lives and has moved a lot of food that would otherwise have not been moved," James Kander, the head

of the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, said Thursday in Washington.

"It's difficult enough to work in these utterly chaotic conditions. For people who are supposed to be relief professionals to take potshots doesn't save any Somali lives and just makes this operation all the more difficult."

The real villains in Somalia, he said, are "the thugs on the ground" who threaten relief shipments.

U.S. aircraft are an important part of the relief effort. But criticism of the airlift grew after the Americans temporarily suspended flights to the western town of Belet Huen two weeks ago when one of their C-130 Hercules cargo planes was struck by a stray bullet.

"The least little thing and they stop," said Boh Koepf, whose Lutheran World Federation has been flying food to both Somalia and the besieged southern Sudan city of Juba in a chartered C-130.

"When they got shot at, I think that scared them half to death," said Mr. Koepf, a veteran aid worker whose planes have landed at Juba under threat of shellfire by surrounding rebels.

"We're very disappointed the U.S. hasn't been able to fly food aid into the most desperate areas of Somalia," said Ian Macdonald, a U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) official in Mogadishu, the Somali capital.

Most U.S. aid flights have been to the towns of Belet Huen, Beledoa, Uejit and Hoddur, all considered relatively safe destinations. Mr. Macdonald asserted that Germany, using two military transport cargo planes similar to the C-130s, was doing a better job of getting food to where it is needed than the Americans with their 14 C-130s.

"We would like them to go to more places, but they have their own operational restraints," said Paul Mitchell, spokesman for the U.N. World Food Programme in Rome.

"What they do in relationship to the others flying, the others are going more places," Mr. Mitchell added.

The World Food Programme is using two C-130s chartered from Southern Air Transport of Miami to fly food to places the Americans have not gone, including the southern town of Bardera. The Germans also fly to Bardera.

U.S. and private aid officials in Nairobi and Somalia, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the Americans have not flown to Bardera because it is the field headquarters of General Mohamed Farrah Aidid, one of Somalia's chief warlords. The Americans scratched 'the town from their list of destinations for fear of appearing to favour him, according to these officials.

In Washington, however, Mr. Kander said U.S. planes are preparing to fly to Bardera, and "the idea that we are playing politics with it is absolutely silly."

The C-130s leased by the

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Les Petites Histoires Preque Varie
18:10 Les Aventures de Bonzo
18:30 Operation Mouski
19:00 News in French
19:15 France 2
19:30 News in Arabic
20:30 Super Blooper
21:00 Life on the Land
21:30 Varieties
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature Film "Return to Justice"

PRAYER TIMES

05:04 Fajr
06:22 Sunrise (Dhuha)
12:27 Dhuhr
15:33 Asr
18:33 Maghrib
19:30 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetish, Tel. 517740
Assumption of God Church, Tel. 627285
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 677440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 622266
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625541
Assumption Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assunta International Church Tel. 683326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 812295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654922
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be partly cloudy and winds will be northwesterly moderate to fresh, causing dust in desert areas. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to fresh and seas choppy.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 15 / 24
Aqaba 20 / 32
Deserts 11 / 27
Jordan Valley 20 / 31

Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 24, Aqaba 33, Humidity readings:

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN 55 per cent, Aqaba 25 per cent.
NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Hani Mamour 750197
Dr. Yusef Samour 615448
Dr. Walid Mami 675448
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tawin 620115
First pharmacy 661912
Pedro's pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637052
Najoudh pharmacy 637072
Al Salem pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsi's pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847652

BEIRUT:
Dr. Mohammed Sharrar 273610
Al Sharrar's pharmacy 275825

ZARQA:
Dr. Essi Omer 901266
Ramel pharmacy 995119

KARAK:

Dr. Ahmad Mahadin (-)
Mr. Ab pharmacy 352170

SALT:

Dr. Abdul Razaq Essaw (-)
Bar's pharmacy (-)

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630441
Rescue 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 643402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630221
Hotel Complaints 602800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (Directory assistance) 121

HOSPITALS

Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 62240590
Repairs 623101
Jordan Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Company 636661
RJ Flight Information 08-33200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-33200

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381332
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 6428116
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 6424412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mellus, J. Amman 641646
Palestine, Shamsi 6617114
Shamsi's Hospital 6617114
University Hospital 845645
Al-Musader Hospital 6672219
The Islamic, Abdul 66612157
Al-Abi, Abdul 641646
Infant, Al-Mahmoud 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf 77511126
Army, Marks 89161115

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09) 5220-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

FOR THE TRAVELLER

Queen Alia Hospital 602240590
Aqaba Hospital 674153
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09) 883323
Zarqa National Hospital (09) 800580
The Sun Hospital (09) 887732
Al-Ham Modern Hospital (09) 990990

BEIRUT:
Princess Reem Hospital (02) 758555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02) 727275
The Al-Nasim Hospital (02) 247100
Aqaba:
Princess Haya Hospital (03) 314111

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
05:55 Cyprus (CY)
09:15 Beirut (BE)
12:00 Athens (AT)
14:20 Abu Dhabi, Kuwait (KU)
14:20 Cairo (CA)
22:45 Dubai (DU)
23:00 Damascus, Paris (AF)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:55 Cyprus (CY)
09:15 Beirut (BE)
12:00 Athens (AT)
14:20 Abu Dhabi, Kuwait (KU)
14:20 Cairo (CA)
22:45 Dubai (DU)
23:00 Damascus, Paris (AF)

Other Flights (Terminal 1)

05:55 Cyprus (CY)
09:15 Beirut (BE)
12:00 Athens (AT)
14:20 Abu Dhabi, Kuwait (KU)
14:20 Cairo (CA)
22:45 Dubai (DU)
23:00 Damascus, Paris (AF)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:55 Cyprus (CY)
09:15 Beirut (BE)
12:00 Athens (AT)
14:20 Abu Dhabi, Kuwait (KU)
14:20 Cairo (CA)
22:4

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Salt to host architecture seminar

AMMAN (Petra) — Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, a one-day symposium on preserving architectural heritage will be held at Salt Cultural Centre Saturday (today). The symposium, organised by Salt Development Corporation and the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), will discuss a proposal prepared by the RSS to develop the centre of the town.

RSS to organise computer training course

AMMAN (Petra) — An advanced training course on computer applications will be held at the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) Saturday (today). The five-month training course aims at developing and training manpower working in the computer field. The course is designed to upgrade the level of performance of workers and to help them acquire experience in methods of advanced programming, and developing demonstration systems by using high capacity computers and computer networks. The course is organised by the RSS Centre for Computer Technology, Training and Industrial Studies.

Ma'in's poor receive free medical treatment

MADABA (Petra) — Jerusalem Hospital, in cooperation with the Madaba Chapter of the Jordan Medical Association Friday carried out a voluntary medical day in Ma'in area, in celebration of His Majesty King Hussein's recovery. The day included medical check-ups for a number of needy patients who also received free drugs. Some of them were returned to Jerusalem and Madaba Hospitals for hospitalisation.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Exhibitions

- ★ Exhibition entitled "A Dialogue in Expression" — works on paper by Naz Ikramallah, Nabila Hilmi and Dodi Tabas at the National Gallery, Jabel Luwelldah Park.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "The Horizon" by Artist Qasem Al Samir and Najah Al Rabi'i at the Housing Bank Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Turkish artist Sabahat at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of sculpture and enamel on copper by Mustafa Ali and Shereen Malla at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition entitled "Elegance" by Jordanian architect Murad Bushnaq at the British Council.
- ★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Jordanian artist Ahmad Na'wash at Alla Art Gallery.

Theatre

- ★ Arabic children's play entitled "Juha and the Donkey" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 7 p.m.

Seminar

- ★ Seminar, in Arabic, entitled "Journalism Between the Martial and Democratic Eras" at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation — 6 p.m.

Jordan sends relief supplies to Pakistan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan has sent a plane-load of relief supplies for the benefit of flood-victims in Pakistan and announced that plans are underway for supplies to the people of Somalia.

More than three million people were reported homeless as a result of the flooding in the River Indus and the landslides which were said to have caused the death of 2000 people.

Hundreds of thousands have been evacuated but many have been reluctant to leave their homes, according to news reports.

The plane carried 16 tonnes of medical equipment and medicines, blankets, foodstuffs and tents to relieve the victims.

The donation came from the Health Ministry, Jordanian pharmaceutical companies, private organisations and individuals, in addition to the Hashemite Charitable Organisation (HCO).

HCO Secretary General Abdul Salam Al Abbadi represented His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in seeing off the representatives of the media, the HCO and other officials on board the plane.

Dr. Abbadi said in a statement

that his organisation's new shipment of relief supplies was "another link in a long chain of charitable activities conducted over the past five years."

He recalled that Jordan sent huge amounts of relief supplies to Sudan following that country's 1985 drought and 1988 floodings and has sent medical teams and construction engineers and technicians to set up electric and water networks for agricultural projects there.

Dr. Abbadi said that the charitable organisation has also sent relief supplies to Bangladesh, following the floods there more than a year ago, medical supplies to the Chechen Ingush Republic and relief supplies and medicines to the people of the Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Somali refugees in Yemen. He said more shipments will go from Jordan to the Bosnia-Herzegovina people.

He said that in the wake of the Gulf crisis, HCO set up centres to provide supplies and humanitarian assistance to 60,000 people.

Pakistan's Ambassador to Jordan Tareq Khan Afridi, who was at the airport to bid farewell to the crew, said in a statement that his country appreciated the Jordanian people's generosity.

Private sector firms grant scholarships

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two private sector firms in Jordan have announced plans to finance the education of 35 Jordanian students as part of their contribution to help the needy in response to a recent call by His Majesty King Hussein to help poor people.

An official at the Housing Bank was quoted by the local press as announcing that the decision was taken by the bank's board of directors to grant 20 needy Jordanian students scholarships to study at Jordan's state universities.

Twenty needy but promising students will each year be granted scholarships to study at the University of Jordan, Yarmouk University, Mu'ta University and the Jordan University of Science and Technology, said the official.

He said that the bank's management was now holding contacts with the four universities to make arrangements.

Meanwhile, the Jordan Weaving and Spinning Company announced that it intends to dispatch 15 male and female school graduates this year to a number of Arab and foreign countries to acquire high-level training in the textile industry.

Gammo, Zaben to run for speakership

By Mariam M. Shabbat
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Two deputies have announced their intention to run for the speakership of the Lower House of Parliament for the fourth and final session, which is expected to convene this fall.

Deputy Abdul Baqi Gammo, an independent Islamist, who lobbied against the legalisation of political parties on religious grounds, has announced his candidacy along with Mohammad Adoub Al Zaben.

Mr. Zaben is the official candidate of the 16-member National Bloc, Suleiman arar, the spokesman of the bloc told the Jordan Times.

With the exception of the National Bloc, no other bloc in Parliament has pledged support for any candidate for the speakership thus far.

The Constitutional Bloc, the Democracy Bloc, Independent Islamic Bloc and the Muslim Brotherhood say they have made no decision to date on who their candidate will be. The Muslim Brotherhood is expected to field current speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat for a third consecutive term.

There is no constitutional limit on the number of times a deputy can be elected speaker.

While speakers for the eight-



Abdul Baqi Gammo



Mohammad Adoub Al Zaben

member Independent Islamic Bloc, the 15-member Constitutional Bloc said they were "very happy with the current speaker" and indicated that they would vote for Dr. Arabiyat's reelection.

Dr. Arabiyat has been fair and equitable and I feel that his experience has helped him become an even better Speaker of the House," said Deputy Fawzi Tuemeh, speaker of the Conservative Constitutional Bloc.

The Constitutional Bloc recently lost deputy Abdul Rauf Al Rawabdeh, an Irbid district parliamentarian, from among its

ranks when he decided to quit the bloc for political reasons.

"Mr. Rawabdeh left us because we differed on political stands and he felt he wanted to be independent of any bloc during the last round of Parliament," said Constitutional Bloc Spokesman Tuemeh.

Many deputies are expected to increase their public visibility both inside and outside Parliament during the fourth session of the House in preparation for their reelection campaigns, say observers in the Lower House.

General elections are scheduled for the fall of 1993.

Prince Salman voices hope for improved Jordan-Saudi relations

SEVILLE (Petra) — Saudi Prince Salman Ben Abdul Aziz Al Saud, prince of the Riyadh region was one of the prominent personalities to visit the Jordanian pavilion at the Seville Universal Expo, 1992, which has just opened a second week of cultural activities.

The prince, who was welcomed by Mazen Armouti, the commissioner of the Jordanian pavilion, and other members of the Jordanian committee in charge of the event, expressed his best wishes for His Majesty King Hussein's continued good health and said he was impressed by the display of Jordanian artefacts and folk

performance.

Prince Salman said he was proud of the "Jordanian-Saudi brotherly relations," voicing hope that these relations would be further improved in the near future.

Discussions between the Saudi prince and Dr. Armouti focused on the importance of Arab countries' participation in international cultural events to reflect the Arab World's "best image to the outside world."

The second week of Jordanian cultural activities within the Seville Universal Expo 1992 opened Wednesday with displays or artefacts and folk performances.

The week's events include lectures, seminars and other activities dealing with inter-Arab relations, Spanish-Arab ties, the history of Andalusia and the Arabs' contributions to human civilisation, according to Dr. Mazen Armouti.

He said that the week will also include Jordanian folkloric events and music by a brass band from the Armed Forces as well as bands from Radio Jordan.

Jordanian pianist Rula Nabli will present classical music recitals and the Royal Jordanian (RJ) Folk Troupes will present a number of performances.

Week-long activities to mark child day

AMMAN (Petra) — A committee entrusted with preparing for the Arab Child Day next month, has announced the completion of its work saying that a week-long programme of activities will be organised to mark the occasion.

The announcement said that the event, to be held under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, will be organised under the slogan: "The Family... and the Future of the Child."

Starting on Oct. 25, the committee will hold a week of seminars, lectures, plays, book exhibitions and drawing competitions for children. The activities will coincide with a cultural programme in observance of the Arab Child Day, which will be organised in the Kingdom by the

Ministry of Culture, according to a committee spokesman.

The spokesman said that the committee will request the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to arrange for Friday mosque sermons to stress the importance of caring for children and the role of parents in bringing up children with full rights and a safe environment.

The committee has arranged for radio and television programmes to focus on the care of children and for seminars and lectures to give guidance and spread public awareness over the suitable upbringing of the new generation.

The committee said a number of field activities, like environment protection campaigns, visits

to sick children in hospitals and institutions which care for orphaned children, and a charity bazaar to market the products of needy families, will also be organised.

In addition, the committee said, a free medical treatment day will be held to benefit needy families.

The committee said it will conduct visits to schools and organise poetry reciting competitions, conduct health education lectures for the benefit of children and carry out other relevant activities during the week.

It said that the programme was in implementation of resolutions by the National Conference on Children held in May.

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Jordan Times

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Talks at new juncture

IN SPITE of the fact that the sixth round of Arab-Israeli bilateral talks in Washington has ended with little or no sign of tangible progress, parties to these negotiations appear determined to pursue the peace process and rightly so. This comes amidst new signs that movement can be expected on at least some fronts, most notably the Syrian-Israeli one. Negotiators from both sides have stated that lack of progress thus far has been nevertheless associated with first-ever discussions on substantive issues dividing the two countries. The tone of the peace talks were also described as "infinitely better than before." Such new perspectives tell a refreshing story, raising new hopes that the next round, which is projected to start on Oct. 21, will bear fruit after all.

So all the crawling in the Syrian-Israeli peace negotiations so far are viewed by all sides as approaching a new threshold in the peace negotiations and not necessarily in vain.

Even the Syrian spokeswoman found enough substance in the sixth round to prompt her to describe the just-ended talks as not necessarily "useless."

"The peace process," the Syrian spokeswoman said Thursday, "is very complicated and the issues are of great importance. So we should use some patience."

But what highlighted renewed optimism on the Syrian-Israeli front is the declaration of Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa during his meeting Wednesday with U.S. Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger in Washington that his country was prepared and willing to offer "total peace" to Israel in return for total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. This seems to have been the sort of language that Israel has sought from the Syrian side since Yitzhak Rabin's government came to power and insisted on having full and complete peace with Damascus as condition for any territorial concessions with regard to the Syrian Golan Heights. It is possible though that Rabin had not actually counted on hearing the statement by Sharaa linking the offer of the kind of peace that Israel seeks with complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories. It is also possible that the new Labour-led government in Israel has been seeking an independent deal with Syria isolated from the other negotiating fronts especially the kind connected with the Palestinian side. The Syrian offer of total peace therefore throws the ball into Israel's court, and it is now up to the Rabin government to respond in kind. Rejecting Damascus' new offer of peace would certainly put Israel in the corner as the party that is preventing the attainment of healthy peace conditions in the Middle East. So, we will have to wait until October, when the talks then will have to clarify once and for all Israel's willingness to trade "total peace" for "total withdrawal from Arab lands."

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JORDANIAN DAILIES Friday welcomed back King Hussein who has returned fully recovered and enjoying good health, pledging continued efforts in his leadership and relentless endeavours to attain further levels of progress. Al Ra'i daily said that while welcoming the King with all our hearts we can say that his return serves as a new impetus for our renewed efforts and for our continued work. The tumultuous welcome accorded to the King was a manifestation of unity among the Jordanian people who should show further display of determination and resolve behind their leader to confront the challenges, said the daily. The paper said the return of the king to his community and people give another motivation for their continued efforts and an escalation of their various activities in all fields to achieve further development and build a strong nation. The paper said that the return of the King should infuse in the hearts of people both in the private and public sectors added enthusiasm and zeal for work and for more sacrifice as a proof of their allegiance to the throne and their loyalty to the nation. It is the duty of the Jordanian people, said the paper, to translate their love into practice at all levels and in every field, and so provide further evidence of this legendary unity between leader and people.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily commented on the end of the sixth round of talks between the Arab and Israeli negotiators in Washington. The Arab parties ought to be brave enough and take stock of the past meeting, seriously reviewing the situation and analysing the outcome of the series of meetings, called Mohammad Kharroub. So many hopes were dashed and so much disappointment emerged as a result of the Israeli team's intransigence, reflecting the adamant position of the Rabin government, said the writer. As the first anniversary of the Madrid opening conference draws near, the Arab parties can clearly see that nothing of substance has been achieved during the past six rounds of talks with the Israeli side, added the writer. He said that there is no justification for the Arab parties to accept the Israeli way of handling and steering the peace negotiations, which yielded no fruitful outcome, and there is no justification for the Arabs to accept the idea of resuming the talks on Oct. 21, one week before the American presidential elections, the writer continued. He said that Mr. Rabin has succeeded not only in securing the U.S. administration's approval of loan guarantees for Israel, but also in changing Israel's political and diplomatic image abroad. Yet, as nothing has been achieved on the ground, said the writer. The Arab parties to the talks should reexamine the whole position before fully agreeing to the seventh round of talks which is not expected to bring about much to change the present situation.

Peaceful use proposed for nuclear warheads

By Clare Pedrick

ROME — As the international community ponders the implications of the U.S. and Russian deal to cut long-range nuclear warheads by a massive two-thirds, scientists have come up with what they claim is a safe and potentially profitable way of disposing of the lethal warheads.

Uranium and plutonium from dismantled warheads could be converted to provide energy for nuclear power stations, say scientists. Experts from around the world say the technology, already available in the West, could be a safe and economic way of tackling one of the major problems posed by nuclear disarmament — dismantling the world's most dangerous weapons so they can never again be used as instruments of mass destruction and, just as important, making sure no nuclear materials fall into the wrong hands.

The concept, an Italian initiative, is widely seen as a possible solution to a problem given new urgency in the light of the break-up of the Soviet Union and the dangers posed by the severe economic difficulties of the former communist bloc. The plan could ultimately provide valuable spin-offs for the non-nuclear community, say supporters, especially the developing nations, whose need for a clean source of non fossil-fuel energy has never been greater.

Scientists, military strategists and diplomats from East and West have expressed serious interest in the idea, which would involve pooling technologies to convert fissionable material — uranium and plutonium — to nuclear fuel.

"Unlike conventional weapons, the critical component of nuclear weapons, namely the fissionable materials, cannot simply be destroyed. The only way is to remove these materials as tempting sources for new nuclear weapons and to convert them into fuel for nuclear reactors whose sole purpose is the generation of electrical energy," said Dr. Harold Agnew, a leading U.S. nuclear scientist and former director of the famous Los Alamos centre, where much of the U.S.'s nuclear research has been centred.

The challenge presented by the potential dismantling of thousands of nuclear weapons is that of ensuring that the enriched uranium and plutonium contained in these weapons is not diverted to other nations who desire a nuclear weapons stockpile but have no fissionable material," he added.

Obtaining fissionable material is widely seen as the major obstacle for nations seeking to become nuclear powers. The know-how is more readily available, say experts. Scientists estimate some groups and governments would be prepared to pay millions of dollars for a warhead from the redundant Russian and U.S. nuclear stockpiles.

According to widely publicised estimates, the U.S. and Russia each have 100 tonnes of weapons-grade plutonium and 500 tonnes of highly enriched uranium in their weapons. The historic accord signed between U.S. President George Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin in June in Washington, DC will mean each side cutting its present arsenal of 10,000 strategic warheads by two-thirds — a far greater reduction than was planned by the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which provided for a ceiling of 8,500 warheads for the U.S. and 6,500 for Russia.

There are currently an estimated 50,000 nuclear warheads worldwide, 96 per cent of them in the arsenals of the former Soviet Union and the U.S. Any of these warheads could kill up to 500,000 people in the space of a few seconds if exploded in a medium-sized city, say experts. And although both Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Bush have agreed to cooperate on disposing of warheads in an environmentally safe manner, no technique has yet been agreed on for achieving that goal.

The dangers are clear, say scientists. "These days, it does not take much imagination to recognise factions and movements which would put to death the historical opponent if the means to do so could be obtained by purchase or theft," said Dr. Richard Garwin, a U.S. nuclear weapons expert and consultant to the U.S. government on military technology and arms control. "Threats might even be posed by less fanatical groups," he added.

One plan under discussion is for Russia, which owns the lion's share of the former Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal, to sell its excess fissionable material to the West for conversion to fuel for nuclear reactors. Another would involve a system of sharing the technology to favour the development of nuclear power in the former communist nations and beyond, albeit under strict supervision and with vastly improved safety provisions and better-built reactors.

Dr. Kazuhiko Uematsu, direc-

tor general of the Nuclear Energy Agency at the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), says Russia's excess warheads could be shipped to conversion facilities in France, the U.K., Germany or Belgium under the strict supervision of the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency. "If there is sufficient excess capability in the West, why not offer it to the former Soviet Union, which needs financial and technological help?" said the Japanese-born scientist. "Of course, we would need to bring the materials from the ex-Soviet Union to the West, but that part of the cost would not be excessive."

"We need action. We are running out of time," he added. "No-one wants to have these materials floating around."

The U.S. and Japan also have the technology to convert fissionable materials into nuclear reactor fuel, though these nations would be too far from Moscow to take delivery of plutonium or uranium. Russia has at least part of the technology, but lacks the capital to carry out the conversion on a large scale. The technique involves diluting highly enriched uranium and blending plutonium into a mixed oxide of plutonium and uranium. That deactivates the fissionable materials as potential weapons and converts them into a fuel for producing nuclear-powered electricity.

Dr. Uematsu stresses that the conversion process could only be undertaken by a handful of nations, operating under the tightest security. "The handling of plutonium, in particular, is a very very sensitive technology and not many countries have it at the moment," he said. "There is no wish to proliferate such technology to other countries, so when we speak of the conversion and treatment of plutonium that should only be done by countries who firstly, have a plutonium security, have a stable political situation, and thirdly, have no possibility of going into nuclear weapons production. If you apply all those criteria, you end up with a very small number of countries," he added. "These are the ones who should be helping the former Soviet Union."

"According to estimates, the U.S. and Russia each have 100 tonnes of weapons-grade plutonium and 500 tonnes of highly enriched uranium in their nuclear weapons."

The Russian government is already firmly committed to the principle of converting nuclear technology to civilian purposes, but is daunted by the scale of the costs involved. Viktor Mikhailov, minister for atomic energy in the Russian government, says simply destroying the nuclear arsenal will cost an estimated \$1.5 billion and take around 20 years. "We have already destroyed 20 per cent of our nuclear arsenal and the proposals made by President Yeltsin at the end of last year mean it is expected to destroy at least a further 50 per cent," said Mr. Mikhailov. "Conversion of nuclear weapons is another task. It's extremely difficult any very complex."

According to Mr. Mikhailov, one in every three people employed in Russia's nuclear industry is currently engaged in finding new peaceful outlets for the former superpower's massive military nuclear stockpile. "By 1995, that figure will be one in two," said the minister. Programmes under way involve using military production lines to design and build goods for the civilian market, including telecommunications systems, computers, fibre-optics, television and radio sets and research into nuclear medicine.

But lack of capital is holding other conversion technology back, say the Russians. "We are willing to listen to proposals from all countries who want to become involved with us, but they must understand they are going to have to pay," said Mr. Mikhailov. Lt. Gen. Sergei Zelentsov, deputy chief of the armed forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), is similarly blunt in his call for financial backing. "The world can only be saved from the most dangerous weapons ever created by mankind with the cooperation of all the members of the international community," he said.

According to some scientists, converting fissionable material to nuclear reactor fuel could make economic sense. An Italian study has calculated that the conversion of the world's supply of highly enriched uranium would give a net

benefit of between \$50 and \$60 billion in energy sales, once all the overhead had been paid for. "That is not enough to put the world to rights," said Prof. Mario Silvestri, project coordinator for Italy's STES, an organisation which groups scientists concerned about ethical and development issues and which hosted the Rome conference, together with Italy's De Gasperi Foundation, founded to promote world peace. "But it is a significant sum, and more importantly, the process would achieve the aim of destroying instruments of war and rendering them irreversible."

Some experts say the financial aspect is a secondary issue. "They should proceed irrespective of whether it is economically viable or not," said Dr. Wyn Llewellyn, a British scientist and a member of the Atomic Energy Authority. "Speed is of paramount importance."

One of the major drawbacks to the conversion plan is public concern over the safety aspects of nuclear power, especially at the nuclear plants built in the former communist bloc. The explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Ukraine in April 1986 is a constant reminder of the scale of the damage that can be wrought when reactors are poorly designed, maintained or managed. Scientists say new reactors are needed, with modern designs that have built-in safeguards. "These concerns will persist until drastic changes are made in the design of the next generation of nuclear power reactors," said U.S. nuclear scientist Dr. Agnew.

According to Dr. Agnew, it is now technically feasible to build reactors which are so safe that even human error need not be a worry. "Reactors can be designed which do not depend on mechanical devices for their safe operation and for which the safety is independent of any actions taken by the operators," he said.

Dr. Agnew favours a system of leasing reactor fuels to countries which are non-nuclear nations and which seek to introduce or expand nuclear energy programmes. He proposes the setting up of an international nuclear fuel bank. The fuel would be owned by the nuclear nations and supplied on lease to other countries. That would make it easier to control the fissionable material itself and would ensure that spent fuel was returned for recycling, thus reducing the problem of toxic waste being disposed of in an irresponsible manner, he says.

With such safety procedures in operation, the benefits of nuclear energy could be passed on to the developing nations, say scientists. "It could be a means of avoiding using fossil fuels and therefore global warming," said Dr. Llewellyn. "The developing nations could benefit from an acceleration in nuclear programmes by using fissionable materials liberated from these nuclear warheads."

Added Dr. Agnew: "The developing nations are in dire need of electrical energy. Without it they will never develop. Most of them have no indigenous fossil-fuel sources. Many of them have been stripping their forests of wood to burn and are creating massive desert areas."

Russians have stressed the precautions they are taking to monitor their nuclear stockpiles while decisions are taken over how to dispose of them — a fact widely conceded by Western scientists. Said Dr. Llewellyn: "The Russians are certainly very careful and extremely responsible in the way they are transporting and storing the materials."

Similarly, CIS armed forces deputy chief Lt. Gen. Zelentsov says he wants to allay fears of a so-called brain drain of Russian nuclear scientists to high-paying foreign countries. "In the nuclear industry, only two to three thousand people have access to the information... At the Ministry of Defence, the number of military personnel knowing the details of a nuclear warhead construction is very limited and contains some thousands of men. So the possibility of the information (brain) drain practically does not exist," he said.

But the Russian general is also anxious to make it clear that no conversion programme can be seen as a magic cure for the dangers posed by the presence of nuclear weapons. In spite of the massive cuts agreed by presidents Yeltsin and Bush, nuclear research — and field tests — will continue in both Russia and the U.S., he says. In spite of the new entente between the old super-power enemies, neither side wants to be left without a modern arsenal, should new friendships crumble. But research will also continue because, no matter how tight the safeguards, there is always the chance that the future may bring the unwanted news that the world now has what the general describes as "new nuclear club members". World News Link.

THIS WEEK IN PRINT Washington talks: 'Tug-of-war with no fruitful results'

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

IN THE past week commentators and columnists in the daily press gave prominence to the expected return of King Hussein to Jordan, expressing the Jordanian people's rejoicing over the great occasion.

Columnists and editorials also tackled the Middle East peace process, the situation in Iraq and the Arab World and tackled a variety of domestic issues of concern to the public. On the subject of peace process, Sawt Al Shaab daily called for an outright Arab boycott of the peace negotiations, describing them as futile and a waste of time.

While Israel is showing increased intransigence the United States is manifesting its bias towards the Rabin government's policies at the negotiating table and in the occupied Arab territories, said the daily. Israel, the paper added, was trying to gain more time and stall any settlement, while the American administration was going along with that game and ignoring the Arab demands and Arab feelings, said the daily.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily described the talks in Washington as a tug-of-war between the Arabs and Israel, with no fruitful result. Salameh Elkour said that while Israel is aiming at a separate peace with Syria over the Golan Heights, the Arabs are still hoping that pressure would be exerted on the Rabin government to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions.

The writer said that while each side is reaffirming its stand, the United States, which is supposed to be a fair judge, is showing total bias towards Israel, with President Bush declaring that Washington would guarantee Israel's complete superiority over the Arab forces put together. Therefore, the writer concluded, the bilateral and the multilateral talks are not expected to achieve any positive results.

The majority of people in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan are convinced that the negotiations in Washington will achieve nothing for them. At the same time, there is a strong opposition inside the occupied Arab lands to the ongoing negotiations and, therefore, they can decide whether to keep their negotiators in Washington or not, said the writer.

He said that the Palestinians can not pull out unilaterally from the negotiations and anything in this respect should be done in concert with the other Arab parties.

Taber Al Udwan said that for the Arabs to achieve anything at all at the Washington parley, they should stick together and negotiate on all fronts simultaneously. At the same time, said the columnist who writes for Al Dustour, the Palestinians should be supported in their position of opposing Israel's offer of self-administration which can not achieve the aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Europe, economy to dominate Britain's Labour Party conference

By Steve Pagani
Reuters

LONDON — Britain's opposition Labour Party, still smarting after a fourth successive election defeat, gathers next week for its annual conference with a new leader facing internal division over its future.

John Smith, the 54-year-old Scottish lawyer who won a contest for the Labour leadership in July, will attempt to stamp his authority on the conference.

One of his aims will be to head off any squabbling over why Labour lost a general election in April against a Conservative government battling deepening recession and rising unemployment.

Europe may come to his aid. Last week's withdrawal of sterling from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) and its effective devaluation has concentrated the political debate in Britain on the future of the European Community (EC) and ratification of the Maastricht Treaty on closer European union.

And that debate, coupled with expected condemnation of the government's handling of the sterling crisis, is likely to dominate the conference in the north-west English resort of Blackpool.

He said that if Arabs are determined not to lose the chance of negotiations they ought to adhere strongly to their rights.

Despite all the reaffirmations on the part of the negotiating parties that they adhere to a comprehensive settlement, one can not help remaining apprehensive of the thought that Israel and the United States might succeed in imposing separate peace treaties on the Arabs, said Saleh Al Qalab in Al Dustour daily.

The writer said that according to the Camp David Accords Washington succeeded in separating Egypt from the rest of the Arab World, and through the Golan Heights Washington and Israel are hoping to take Syria out of the negotiating arena, leaving the other occupied Arab territories under Israel's control.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily attacked the Western powers which were prompt to attack Iraq for its occupation of Kuwait and failure to come to the help of the Gulf states when Iran occupied Abu Musa Island in the Gulf.

Salameh Elkour said that by occupying Abu Musa Island the Iranians proved they were intent on expanding, but the Western powers proved that they did not give any real regard to Arab interests. He asked why there was not another Desert Storm to evict the Iranians from occupied Arab territory.

The U.S.-led aggression on Iraq was not launched to evict the Iraqis from Kuwait, but rather to destroy the Arab power found in Iraq and secure the interests of the West in the oil fields and those of Israel in the occupied Arab lands the writer said.

A columnist in Al Ra'i said the United Arab Emirates (UAE) deserves all Arab support for its stand vis-a-vis Iran's occupation of the Abu Musa Island.

Mahmoud Rimawi said that there must be total Arab consensus and solidarity with regard to this sensitive question but, at the same time, we should expect solidarity among the Arabs not only with regard to the UAE island but concerning all Arab issues, including the sanctions on Iraq.

The writer said that the Arabs can seize the UAE island as an opportunity to end

their differences and embark on meaningful steps, leading to genuine solidarity.

Abdul Rahim Omar, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, said that Iran was allowed to occupy the Abu Musa Island as a reward for its part in the conspiracy against Iraq during the 30-nation aggression on Iraq. The writer said that Iran has now turned down the Syrian mediation efforts and is ignoring Arab countries' bids for reconciliation, assured of continued Western support for its actions against the Arabs.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabie daily discussed higher education in Jordan calling on the Higher Education Council to allow all students to study any subject, of their choice, at the private and state universities of Jordan.

Fakhri Kassar said that students unable to find the right seats for the right subjects are going abroad causing the country great losses in hard currency. The writer said that the council should take measures providing facilities for Jordanians to study in the Kingdom.

Tareq Masarweh, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, said that Jordan was losing a great deal of money as a result of continued U.S. pressure and the siege imposed on the Aqaba Port. At least JD 125 million has been lost in transit business in the past few months as a result of the Western naval forces' continued siege imposed on the port, the writer said.

He said that the time has come for Jordan to raise its voice in protest, it can do that by pulling out from the peace negotiations in Washington.

A columnist in Al Dustour said that the government has failed so far to enact a law banning alcohol in public, although this was a persistent demand on the part of Parliament members. The time for the resumption of Parliament's ordinary session is drawing near, but there are no indications that the government would submit a draft law to the House for debate or approval, said Mohammad Subeichi.

The writer said that perhaps the government is apprehensive about the whole issue, fearing that the subject would enflame the situation and cause confrontation between the legislative and executive branches of government.



ference and toe the party line. "This is a matter of overriding constitutional importance involving a major shift of economic decision-making which will alter the political destiny of the country," Mr. Gould said on Wednesday.

"I find it deeply offensive for the French, Irish and Danes to be consulted (in referenda) but not the British."

Despite the Europe debate, Mr. Smith will not get off without some browbeating. The conference agenda contains a number of resolutions critical of Labour's election campaign.

A party study of the election concluded that voters' fears of a tax-increasing Labour government, fuelled by the Conservative tabloid press, swung the tide against Labour.

Mr. Smith played a prominent role in the election campaign, shaping Labour's high tax policies to fund welfare and education.

Labour's traditional working class vote was partly lost in the 1980s to Mrs. Thatcher whose more nationalist, get-rich-quick policies appealed to younger blue-collar workers.

Mr. Smith's high tax proposals also scared off a large section of the middle class vote.

U.S. election may delay progress

(Continued from page 1)

occupied Jordanian lands, and various aspects of security, including settlements," he said.

"There is a basic difference in approach by the two sides. We in Jordan want an agenda with as much clarity as possible in order to draw a well-defined framework that would facilitate negotiations later on. The Israelis, on the other hand, would like a more general, less committed agenda that would defer disagreements until later. We feel that this approach of the Israelis is not particularly practical as it tries to blur the issues and deal with the peripheral issues now rather than with the central ones."

"We also feel that the line between the multilateral and the bilateral negotiations is not clearly defined. There are many items on our agenda that have both bilateral and multilateral dimensions. We feel that we have been put in a position where, at times, we would be asked by the Israelis to defer discussing a certain issue to the multilateral arena, only to find out there that it should be discussed in the bilateral arena. We cannot afford to have the issues blurred in such a manner, and we feel that there are political and legal dimensions to such issues that have to be addressed in the bilateral discussions, while other dimensions, such as regional cooperation, can be deferred to the multilateral arena."

"To sum up, the round saw a process of unfolding of the two sides' positions on the issues where it is now much clearer where each of the two sides stand. As such, there was lateral movement, but not one that produced much forward progress. Our overall assessment is that we have not detected any strategic change in the Israeli position that is of significance. What seemed to be flexible Israeli public statements from the Rabin government have not been reflected in the negotiating room in our track."

"Dr. Musaher said the two sides were taking time to agree on the agenda and feel that that is not time wasted because the two sides are trying to agree on the "angles" that the issues are to be approached and discussed. "If it's going to take more time now to agree on an agenda, then move faster later on with the negotiations, then we think it is worth it," he said.

Dr. Musaher explained that the lateral movement which has taken place during this month lies in that both sides have tried different workings that both sides can agree on in the agenda. He indicated that the two sides have been "somewhat successful" at bridging the gap on some issues, including water and the issue of the comprehensiveness of the settlement as a goal of the peace process. Proposals and counter proposals were exchanged on other issues, he said, adding that he cannot report much progress on those issues.

On the issue of comprehensiveness, Dr. Musaher indicated that the Israeli delegation has acknowledged that the goal of the peace process should be comprehensive. In addition to other things, reaching a comprehensive peaceful settlement. "What the Israeli understanding of such comprehensiveness is not, of course, very clear yet because we have not entered into any discussion of the issue. But there were more that the word has been included, we feel, is a change, probably the only significant change on the Israeli position in this round," he said.

He explained that the informal discussions the two sides are having do not constitute "negotiations in the real sense," but have more to do with exploring the other side's position. He indicated that the two sides have exchanged many papers — proposals on different items on the agenda, all which will be studied closely after which the two sides will "hopefully come back with some new ideas."

Asked whether he felt it was time for the U.S. to step in before the seventh round so that the two sides agree on the agenda, Dr. Musaher said Jordan feels that the U.S. should play and is playing a very important role in the process. He indicated that the Jordanian delegation, together with U.S. officials to "consult" between the rounds, as was the case in earlier rounds, in order to bridge some of the gaps in order to create some forward movement.

Itamar Rabinovich, head of Israel's negotiating team with Syria, arrived at Tadmor's Ben Azzur airport. "We are returning home with a sense of accomplishment," he said.

On the talks with Syria, Mr. Rabinovich said: "We understand each other possibly better than before."

However, he also indicated, "We do not agree on a number of issues, such as the nature of peace."

Israel has said it will not discuss any "territorial concessions" in the Golan Heights, until Syria declares it is willing to come to a full peace, including full diplomatic relations, open borders, and normalisation of trade and commerce.

Mr. Rabinovich noted that Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa used "a very attractive term, total peace, but he linked it to total withdrawal, and actually not just to total withdrawal from Syrian territory, but from all Arab land." He said Israel was still assessing exactly what Syria was offering and demanding.

Elyakim Rubinstein, heading the negotiations with the Palestinians, said Friday Israel was waiting for a response to a series of proposals on how a transitional autonomy plan could be implemented in the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

Mr. Rabin has suggested the possibility that Israel form a confederation with Palestinians after the autonomy period.

Mr. Rabin said Jews had a right to all of "eretz Israel," but he was against creating a "greater Israel" given the reality of the territories' population.

"I don't want to add 1.7 million Palestinians as citizens of the state of Israel... in the current circumstances, I prefer a Jewish state over a binational state," he said.

Israel's delegation to the peace talks in Washington returned to Israel Friday as Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin criticised the framework of the talks in a published interview.

Mr. Rabin faulted the talks for being part of an international conference rather than direct negotiations. "The Arab parties... come at the same time to the same place. This fact creates a dangerous link" between the different negotiations, Mr. Rabin said in an interview in the army's Samahane magazine published Thursday.

"Theoretically this formula is not ideal. Israel agreed to it under pressure, and I inherited it," Mr. Rabin said.

He said history showed that Arab countries never reached agreement with Israel in negotiations in an international forum. "The Arab parties... come at the same time to the same place. This fact creates a dangerous link" between the different negotiations, Mr. Rabin said in an interview in the army's Samahane magazine published Thursday.

Mr. Rabin said the peace process has brought the Palestinians nothing but more suffering. Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said in Washington Thursday.

"We have tried to make this peace process a constructive, positive process that would bring concrete changes on the ground, and, unfortunately, it hasn't happened," she added.

And Syrian spokeswoman Bushra Kaafar told an Egyptian radio station: "We made no progress in this round."

Sources close to Mr. Rabin said Friday the prime minister was furious at Education Minister Shulamit Aloni for saying he would challenge the entire Heights for full peace with Syria.

The prime minister, responding to what he said in the newspaper, said it is useless. It has no ground in reality. He said it is nonsense. Mr. Rabin's spokeswoman said of Ms. Aloni's comments to the mass-circulation newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth.

He said Mr. Rabin would meet ministers in Ms. Aloni's Meretz alliance Sunday to discuss her future. Ms. Aloni, an outspoken leftist, has also generated controversy by criticising ultra-religious Jews.

Mr. Rabin's office called Ms. Aloni's comment about the Golan "foolishness."

It said Mr. Rabin summoned her and other ministers from the Meretz bloc to his office Sunday "with regard to the continued tenure of Ms. Aloni within the government."

Mr. Rabin intended to tell the education minister he holds her responsible for any government crisis, said a government source, referring to the Sias religious party's threat to withdraw from the cabinet over her another remark on soldiers' prayers.

However, the government source said Mr. Rabin was unlikely to remove Ms. Aloni despite demands from religious parties. Mr. Rabin needs Meretz's 12 votes in parliament to stay in power, the source noted, speaking on condition of anonymity.

What upset Mr. Rabin was Ms. Aloni's statement in Yedioth Ahronoth that "Rabin will agree to return the Golan Heights in exchange for full peace. He'll do it in stages."

Mr. Rabin said these statements "foolishness and folly which have no basis in reality," according to the statement from his office.

I had no voice and so much to say

By A. H. Raskin

NEW YORK — As the national labour correspondent of The New York Times for more than 40 years I always considered a vibrant, principled union movement a hallmark of American democracy. My mission, I felt, was to bring together organised labour, employers, the workers and government.

My most valuable tool, I thought, was making sense of the turmoil. I was wrong. My most valuable tool is words, the words I can now use only with difficulty.

My voice is debilitated — mute, a prisoner of a communication system damaged by a stroke that has robbed me of language.

Individuals who have had a stroke battle against the twin demons of frustration and depression. Their recovery period is maddeningly gradual. Some remain permanently incapacitated and unable to care for themselves.

I am fortunate to have had sufficient recovery that I am physically independent; to speak, however, demands great effort. I am limited to short utterances.

The stroke happened in September 1990 at a time when I could take delight in my good health and vigour as a widower 80 years young. I had recently met Marjorie Neikrug, curator of a photographic gallery and the woman who would become my wife.

On Sept. 29, a Saturday, Marge and I went to the funeral of a union leader at St. Patrick's Cathedral. We walked home and had lunch, planning to catch a train for Spring Valley to visit Marge's daughter. We never did.

During lunch I noticed that my right arm was getting heavier; then I passed out. Marge realised I was in trouble and pushed me back into my chair.

The ambulance took me to the emergency room of New York Hospital. There, a CAT scan confirmed that I had suffered a

cerebral-vascular accident — in layman's terms, a stroke — caused by an embolism blocking the blood flow to the main artery feeding the brain.

An experimental drug, Eptanase, was administered, preventing further damage within the left brain in an area that controls speech, reading comprehension and writing. The medical term for this disorder is aphasia.

I was shell-shocked and disoriented, unaware of what was happening to me. I desperately wanted to make sense of the confusion; but every time I tried to express myself nothing came out.

I was forced to remain silent and could not follow either verbal or written commands. Words sounded to me like jargon, as though the people around me spoke a foreign tongue. I could neither comprehend nor use language.

In addition, the stroke left my right arm and leg semi-paralysed. I lay in bed, staring blankly and feeling helpless.

Over the next few days my doctors recorded marked improvement. My most notable and rapid accomplishment was to walk without assistance.

After long and tedious hours during which Marge rotated my legs and, most importantly, gave me encouragement, it was a blessing to be able to walk to her once again. My understanding of simple conversation also seemed to be returning. I began to produce what I thought were words, but the puzzled look on the faces of my audience showed me that my long-awaited words were mere gibberish.

Then, little by little, people began reacting to my vocalisation. Imagine my relief at again being able to express my basic needs with a single word such as "eat," "drink" or "toilet."

Each utterance involved deep concentration and struggle. Each "new" word was received with elation by my family and friends.

A baby must be excited like that when he utters his first "mama." It is difficult to convey the depth of my emotional solitude. I did not feel like A.H. Raskin. I now had a new self, a person who no longer could use words with mastery.

Privately I could do nothing but cry. With the tears came feelings of anxiety and depression. I wandered between feelings of melancholy and hope.

The desire to achieve, to succeed, to win, to regain my confidence manifested itself in the practice that Marge and I incorporated into our daily routine.

Every night I challenge her to a game. It becomes our happy hour as we play and joke. Whether it is bingo or backgammon there is one rule: Marge can't win and I can't lose. I am such a sorehead.

Speech therapy, which I continued on a daily basis, was a labourious and disturbing battle. My body was nearly back to normal, but I felt that a black hole was swallowing my speech.

Could I hope for a total reemergence of my language skills? Would this daily grind pay off? I persisted and the therapists pushed me to do more. My speech clarity was poor because of weak facial muscles, so I had to

focus on improving my articulation skills. I sat before a mirror with Debbie, my therapist, intently studying each movement of her mouth and trying to imitate her with as much accuracy as possible. I was drilled to respond to word-retrieval tasks such as finding opposites, sentence production and sentence formulation.

Reading was just as difficult. The printed word at first resembled hieroglyphics. Later, individual words became recognisable and took on meaning, but I could not decipher a printed statement. Looking at a group of words was overwhelming. It was

as though the words were catapulting off the page and I could make no sense of them.

The therapist presented two words, three words, four words and more until I graduated to sentences. I felt mournful and frightened then tense, anxious and full of rage. Yet I knew that I had to get back on that horse.

Initially, when I tried to write my name I just scribbled. Slowly, by copying the letters over and over, it began to come back to me. Spelling was no longer automatic. I was drilled to put down letters and words to dictation, finish the spelling of incomplete words and look for errors in

misspelled words. Gradually I combined words in order to form sentences, although I tended to omit the articles and prepositions. Verb tense was yet another chore. I had to rethink all of the irregular and plural forms before printing it out.

We can still speak! We hope you will listen with your ears, with your eyes and always with your heart.

The writer was deputy editor of the editorial page of The New York Times from 1962 until his retirement in 1976. The article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

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Iraq denounces American plan

(Continued from page 1)

and Japan. Many of the assets, including \$1.4 billion in the United States, were frozen two years ago after the invasion.

Diplomats say the revised resolution has the support of Japan, Britain and France, other foreign countries where Iraq kept large sums of oil money.

The United Nations would be able to confiscate up to \$200 million from each country holding Iraqi oil revenues, but would not be allowed to touch money claimed by Iraq's creditors.

The accounts would be reimbursed when the sanctions are lifted.

In addition, Saudi Arabia and Turkey would be allowed to sell Iraqi oil they have been storing since the invasion, and turn over the proceeds to the United Nations.

Last fall, the United Nations had proposed to let Iraq sell \$1.6 billion of oil in a one-time exclusion from sanctions to pay for U.N. operations in Iraq and Iraq's promised reparations to victims of the invasion. But Iraq refused the terms of the sale.

Foreign Minister Sahaf met Thursday with U.N. officials in New York to explore resuming negotiations about a possible \$1.6 billion oil sale.

"He opened the possibility of resuming talks regarding the selling of oil," said Mr. Ayala Lasso of Ecuador.

Mr. Sahaf held exploratory meetings with Mr. Ayala Lasso as well as non-aligned members of the council but U.N. officials said he had not yet requested any formal talks with them on resuming oil sales.

The Iraqi minister said his main objection to the U.N. resolutions demanding Iraq sell \$1.6 billion worth of oil over a six-month period was that the amount was insufficient, according to envoys at the meetings.

Instead he proposed Iraq begin oil sales with \$4 billion, an objective almost certain to be rejected by the council on grounds the initial complicated plan, which involves heavy U.N. monitoring, needed to be tested first.

Mr. Sahaf said that Iraq, if it could increase its oil flows, would even donate five per cent of the revenues to U.N. relief projects.

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4 top seeds breeze into Tokyo tennis semifinals

TOKYO (AP) — Top-seeded Monica Seles crushed Japan's eighth-seeded Naoko Sawamatsu 6-1, 6-0 Friday in less than one hour in a quarterfinal match in the Nichirei International Ladies Tennis Championship.

Advancing into the semifinals along with Seles were second-seeded Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina, third-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez of the United States and fourth-seeded Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria.

Seles faces Fernandez and Sabatini plays Maleeva in the semifinals Saturday.

Sabatini outlasted Japan's seventh-seeded Kimiko Date, 6-4, 6-2, and Fernandez trounced Japanese qualifier Kyoko Nagatsuka, 6-0, 6-2.

Maleeva defeated American Marianne Werdel 6-4, 6-4 before nearly 6,000 spectators that included Crown Prince Naruhito at Ariake Coliseum.

The victory improved the 18-year-old Yugoslavian star's match record this year to 60 victories against five defeats.

Seles hit the ball at her will and Sawamatsu chased it on the back court in the first set.

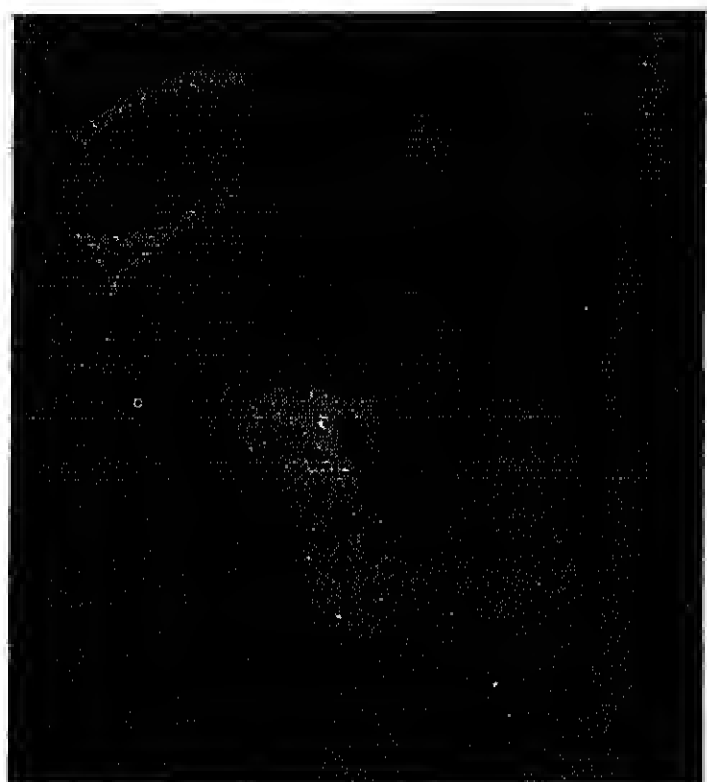
Seles broke the second game and kept the third game, both at love, before breaking the fourth game in the first set.

In the second set, Sawamatsu led 40-love but after pair of deuces, Seles broke the first game.

Seles, the top-ranked woman in the world, jumped to a 40-love lead and also broke the third game as Sawamatsu double-faulted. Seles also broke the fifth game.

"Sawamatsu was very steady and she made few errors so I had to hit some great balls. My ground strokes were better," said Seles, who has won the Australian, U.S. and French Opens this year and was a finalist at Wimbledon. She also won this tournament last year.

Seles smashed five service aces



Gabriela Sabatini

during the match.

Despite the lopsided score, Sabatini, ranked 29th in the world, said she was "satisfied with the results. I played some of my best tennis — aggressively."

After tying 4-4 in the first set, Date became erratic as Sabatini broke the ninth game in the first set.

Date's erratic game continued through early in the second set as Sabatini broke the first, fifth and seventh games while Date broke the fourth game.

Fernandez broke the first and third games of the first set.

The American kept the sixth without losing a point as Nagatsuka hit her forehand long.

In the second set, Nagatsuka, who upset fifth-seeded Amanda Coetzer of South Africa 5-7, 6-3, 6-1 Thursday, led 40-15 in the

second game but Fernandez rallied to keep it after four deuces.

Fernandez and Nagatsuka were the only pair who played in strong winds early in the day. The coliseum's roof was closed after their match.

Fernandez said: "It was terrible. It was definitely too hard to play tennis. They were the windiest conditions I have ever played in."

Asked about Saturday's semifinal, Seles said: "It should be a tough match. The last time I played her it was a very close match. She is a very tough player."

Fernandez, who also lost to Seles in the Australian Open final, has won only one of their 14 encounters. "I just try to play aggressively (against her)," she said.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Mansell sets the pace in Portugal

ESTORIL, Portugal (R) — Newly-crowned world drivers champion Nigel Mansell, seeking a record ninth win this season in Sunday's Portuguese Grand Prix, was fastest in Friday's opening qualifying session. The Briton, driving a Williams, clocked one minute and 13.041 seconds at an average speed of 214.400 kph on the twisting 4.35-kms Estoril track, six-tenths of a second ahead of nearest rival and teammate Riccardo Patrese of Italy. Mansell dominated the morning free session despite a spin off the track and twice lowered his time on a cool and cloudy afternoon which made conditions difficult. He said he had lost his confidence slightly after his morning spin which came as a result of a suspension failure on his "active ride" FW14B car. "It was a big moment," said Mansell. "I really knew about that." He was happier in the afternoon and predicted an improved time Saturday in final qualifying. Mansell currently shares the record of eight wins in a season with Ayrton Senna of Brazil. The McLaren driver could only manage the fourth fastest time Friday, behind Austrian team mate Gerhard Berger.

Algerian captain to join Auxerre

AUXERRE, France (R) — Algeria captain Moussa Saib is to join French first division soccer club Auxerre, club sources said Friday. The transfer fee for the 23-year-old midfielder was not disclosed. Said won the African Nations Cup with Algeria in 1990 and the African Champions Cup with his club, Jeunesse Sportive De Kabylie. The new Algerian constitution allows players to be transferred before the age of 29.

More African withdrawals from World Cup

ZURICH (R) — Uganda, Mauritania and Sudan have withdrawn from the 1994 World Cup on economic grounds, the International Football Federation (FIFA) said. They will not be replaced and their African qualifying groups will be reduced from four teams to three. Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Sao Tome and Principe, Malawi and Gambia also pulled out earlier this year. FIFA also announced the indefinite postponement of all Libya's matches in their group because of a United Nations embargo.

Indomitable Lions start Gulf tour

YAOUNDE (R) — Cameroon's national team, the Indomitable Lions, left the Central African country for friendly matches in Iran and Saudi Arabia, officials said. It was not clear if Roger Milla, the star of the team's sparkling 1990 World Cup performance, would play on the tour. Milla, who is accompanying the squad in the specially-created post of administrative director, has said he will continue to play for the Lions in friendly matches. The team, which rocketed to fame when it reached the 1990 World Cup quarterfinals, is expected to arrive in Tehran on Friday via Paris.

Becker warns against complacency

ESSEN, Germany (R) — Boris Becker has warned 1988 and 1989 champions Germany against complacency when they meet Belgium this weekend in a bid to get back into the Davis Cup World Group. The Germans, who were surprisingly knocked out of the cup by Brazil in the first round this year, have called up former Wimbledon champions Becker and Michael Stich and should be the clear favorites to win the relegation play-off tie. But Becker, who has slipped down to eighth in the world rankings, said Thursday: "It's back to square one at the start of any tie. Every match has to be won first." Stich, now 15th in the ATP standings, was drawn Thursday to contest the opening singles against Belgian number one Bart Wuyts, who is ranked 72nd. Becker will play Filip Dewulf, 26th in the world, in the second singles. Argentina, the 1981 finalists, are among the other nations fighting for World Group places in the seven qualifying round ties this weekend. They take on Denmark in Aarhus.

Marseille drop a point at Lens

PARIS (R) — Marseille dropped a point when they were held to a 2-2 draw by Lens in the French Soccer League.

But the champions, who only drew 1-1 at home with Le Havre last Saturday, still joined Paris St. Germain, Nantes and Auxerre, who beat Lille 2-0, in the lead on 12 points.

Though unbeaten since the start of the season, Marseille produced another low-key performance.

Lens were reduced to 10 men from the 35th minute when striker Emmanuel Hattau, who unexpectedly opened the scoring with a superb free-kick in the fifth minute, was sent off for a foul on international defender Basile Boli.

Boli brought Marseille back with a volley after 52 minutes when a header by Bernard Casoni hit the post and bounced back. Germany's Rudi Voller made 2-1 for Marseille in the 66th minute, scoring his fifth goal for

World Cup athletics meet begins today

HAVANA (AP) — The anxiously awaited 100-metre dash between Olympic champion Linford Christie and two-time gold medalist Carl Lewis might have occurred this year, if not for the undue pressure put upon the Briton.

Because of that, the lucrative confrontation will have to wait until 1993.

"If people hadn't made such a fuss, I would have raced him this year," Christie said. "All the fuss saying I would have to race him put a damper on everything."

"Next year will be the best time."

After Christie's victory at Barcelona in August, meet promoters were unsuccessful in getting him and Lewis, the world record-holder, together for a widely televised, big-money race.

Lewis contended he was anxious for the matchup and claimed Christie was ducking him.

"I'm the Olympic champion," Christie said. "I shouldn't be dictated to by anyone. I shouldn't have to run Carl Lewis."

"Nobody says I should run Dennis Mitchell (the 1992 U.S. champion). Carl's run only 10.2 (seconds this year). When he and I are in shape next year, maybe we'll get together."

Frank Dick, coach of the British team competing in the World Cup track and field meet, which begins Saturday night, had a quick solution to the Christie-Lewis dilemma.

"If Carl wanted to race Linford, he would have turned up here," Dick said.

Instead, a tired Lewis opted to skip the meet, as did many of the top Americans.

Christie, meanwhile, will be running the 100, 200 and 400 relay. He was a late addition in the 200 after John Regis was injured when he and Christie collided during a water skiing accident Tuesday while the British team was frolicking in Nassau, Bahamas, before coming to Havana.

Christie thinks he should be ranked No. 1 in the world for the first time in the 100 this year, finally giving him the full respect he never has received.

"It took the Olympics to give me some credit," he said. "There's been no doubt that I'm one of the best in the world if not the best."

"It's taken the world this long a time to realize that others besides Americans can sprint. Now, there's me and Frankie Fredericks."

Fredericks, of Namibia, was the Olympic silver medalist in the

100 and 200. "This doesn't mean the Americans have lost their grip on the world sprints," Christie said. "It just means there are others."

Christie was the first Briton to win the Olympic 100 in a non-boycotted year since Harold Abrahams in 1924. The only other British victory in the event was 1980 when Allan Wells of Scotland beat a field divided by the absence of the boycotted Americans.

Christie, at 32, also was the oldest Olympic 100-metre champion ever. However, at this meet, he won't be the most active athlete.

That honour goes to Marie Jose Percec of France. Percec, the Olympic gold medalist in the women's 400, is scheduled to compete in the 200 and 400 individual races and the 400 and 1,600 relays.

Christie and Percec are among 11 Olympic gold medalists competing.

The other men are Spain's Fermín Caehe, 1,500 metre; Czechoslovakia's Karel Zeleny, javelin; Cuba's Javier Sotomayor, high jump; Lithuania's Romas Ubartys, discus; Kenya's William Tanni, 800 and the United States' Mike Stulce, shot put.

The women are Germany's Heike Drechsler, long jump; Cuba's Maritza Marten, discus, and Ethiopia's Derartu Tulu, 10,000.

The future of the Athletics World Cup seems secure despite mounting criticism from administrators concerned about an already overcrowded schedule.

Although the absence of so many of the world's elite athletes has clearly embarrassed the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF), officials said Thursday the cup was likely to continue.

"The general opinion is that we have it in the years in which there's no World Championships or Olympics," one senior official said.

The World championships are now staged every two years with the next scheduled for Stuttgart, Germany, in 1993. The cup would continue its present four-year cycle with the next due in 1994.

The official said bids for the next World Cup had been received from Birmingham in England, Singapore and South Africa.

Earlier IAAF President Primo Nebiolo told a news conference the future of the cup was in the hands of the federation's governing council. "We have time to decide," Nebiolo said.

Liverpool bring back Grobbelaar

LONDON (R) — Liverpool have axed new goalkeeper David James for Saturday's English Premier League match against Wimbledon after he let in eight goals in the last two games.

Veteran Bruce Grobbelaar will replace the 21-year-old keeper whom Liverpool bought from Watford for £1.5 million (\$2.55 million). James has kept Grobbelaar out all season but has failed to keep a clean sheet in 10 games.

Manager Graeme Souness decided to recall the 38-year-old veteran to inject some confidence back into a Liverpool side who have made their worst start to a season in 39 years.

Souness had stuck loyally by James, but finally changed his mind after a 4-2 defeat at Aston

Villa and Tuesday's 4-4 draw at home to third division Chesterfield.

Souness said: "David was at fault, for one of the goals the other night. I am bringing Bruce back in the hope that his influence will spread to those around him. I feel experience is invaluable at the moment."

C Coventry striker Robert Rosario is winning his fitness battle to face former club Norwich City in the Premier League leadership battle.

Rosario was left out of the midweek League Cup match against Scarborough after aggravating a back injury against Nottingham Forest Monday but has resumed training.

But skipper Stewart Robson will miss his fourth successive

match after complaining of blurred vision.

Coventry, three points behind leaders Norwich, are hoping their impressive record will continue.

In 28 post-war meetings between the sides at Coventry's Highfield Road, Norwich have won just once, by a single goal 12 seasons ago.

But this time Norwich will be going for a club record sixth successive league victory.

Chris Fairclough is set to return to Leeds' defence against injury-hit Everton at Elland Road after missing the midweek cup win over Scunthorpe with a knee injury.

Left back Tony Dorico, who hobbled out of the cup tie with an ankle injury and left the ground on crutches, also has a chance of being fit.

England defender Martin Keown has only recently returned to training and Ian Snodin has suffered a setback on his recovery from a back injury.

Italian sets record time in first stage of Cyprus rally

NICOSIA (AP) — Italian Alessandro Florio set record time Friday in the first special stage of the 955 kilometre Rothman's Cyprus Rally, cutting 20 seconds off the 1988 mark of Kenneth Eriksson. Florio, heading a field of 94 crews from seven countries starting the final coefficient 20 round of the European championship, drove his Astra-Giessa team Lancia Integrale 16V through the 17.76-kilometre stage in 18 minutes and 55 seconds.

Last year's winner, Antonis Jeropoulos of Cyprus in the Shell-sponsored Mitsubishi Gallant VR4, was second.

Third was Polish European championship, contender Marian Bielewicz, driving a Ford Sierra Cosworth 4X4. Britain's Dave Metcalfe in an Opel Corsa GSi was fourth.

The teams finished up for the evening in the Mediterranean island's southwestern coastal town of Paphos for the first regroup of the three-day rally, the 20th Rothman's Cyprus Rally.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH ©1992 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

THE POSITIONAL FACTOR

Both vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH
♠ 7 6
♥ Q 8 4 2
♦ Q 6 4
♣ K Q J

EAST
♠ K 3 2
♥ 10 9 6 5
♦ J 10 5
♣ 10 7 2

SOUTH
♠ A Q J 9 8 4
♥ A 3
♦ A 5 4 3 2
♣ 8 6

The bidding:
East South West North
1 ♠ 1 ♠ Pass 3 NT
Pass 4 ♠ Pass 4 ♠
Pass 6 ♠ Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♠
You won't find much in bridge literature about the positional factor. Tremendous pressure can be exerted on a player by forcing one of your opponents to commit to a defense before partner gets a chance to signal or follow suit, or before anyone has learned much about the distribution. Here is an elegant example of what we mean.

North's cue-bid of four diamonds indicated a fit for one of South's suits as well as first-round diamond control. South did not need much

more to venture to slam. After the lead of the jack of diamonds, it looked as if the slam would depend solely on the position of the king of spades. The opening bid made it likely that a finesse would succeed, but South, Harold Feldheim of Hamden, Conn., wanted better than 50 percent odds of success. Can you find an extra chance for declarer?

At trick two, declarer led the two of hearts from dummy. To appreciate the subtlety of this play, put yourself in the East chair. Suppose that, instead of two diamonds, declarer's red-suit holding was a singleton diamond and the bare ten of hearts. In that case, following low would present declarer with an unmakeable contract. So East shut up with the king of hearts, and that spelled *finesse* for the defense.

Declarer ruffed, cashed the ace of spades and crossed to dummy with the jack of clubs. The queen of hearts was covered by the ace and ruffed. Declarer re-entered dummy with a club, discarded the remaining diamond on the jack of hearts and played a spade to the queen and king. When East could not ruff the club continuation, declarer was able to enter the closed hand with a ruff, draw the last trump and claim the rest of the tricks.

Peanuts

Why Dogs Are the Most Superior of All Creatures On Land, Sea and Sky and Maybe Space.



I THINK YOUR TITLE IS A BIT LONG...



I'LL TAKE OUT THE 'MAYBE'.



Andy Capp

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IF YOU INSIST.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN THAT TAKES CARE OF MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT?



Mutt'n' Jeff

THE MUTTS HAVE A NEW MAID! SHE'S NOT MUCH ON LOOKS BUT OH BOY, CAN SHE COOK! I'M GONNA KEEP ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF HER NAME AND DAWNY!



I'LL GO OVER AND FLATTER HER A BIT!



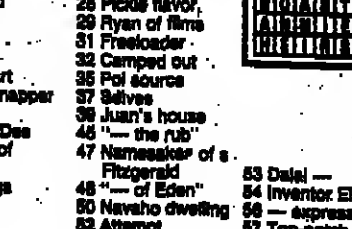
DAWNY, SIT DOWN! I HAVE SOMETHING I WANT TO SAY TO YOU!



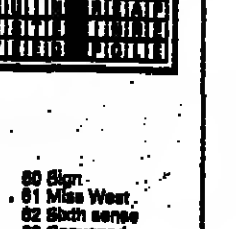
DAWNY, I WANT TO ASK YOU SOMETHING I NEVER ASKED ANY OTHER WOMAN BEFORE!



JA? SET, HOT, ISSIT?



ERR-R-WILL YOU BAKE ME AN APPLE DUMPLING?



THE Daily Crossword by Raymond Hamel

ACROSS
1 Oscar
5 NYC district
9 insignificant
14 One of five lakes
15 Baseball family name
19 Melville novel
17 Weston family
19 Division word
22 Cheekbone
25 River to the Baltic
27 Denver's state
30 That is
33 Serpents
34 Division word
36 Blade
38 Cafe au
40 Melody
41 Shirt starter
42 Whirligig
43 Cognizant of
44 Small change
48 Throat soothers
49 Persian title
51 Moved slowly
52 Delivety
53 Gams
55 Ferocious one
59 Evans family TV show
64 Liturgical vestment
66 Magnificent movies
68 Space acronym
67 Foundations
68 Flocks of pheasants
69 Retained

DOWN
1 Tiny
2 Chair part
3 40-year napper
4 Favorite
5 Actress Doe
6 Casual of fashion
7 Stockings
8 Best
9 Bold
10 Douglas family TV show
11 Lines
12 Lascivious look
13 Lawrence of Arabia director
18 Pical unit
22 The artwork
23 Of mountains
24 Robinson family TV series
26 Singer with "The Belmonts"
27 Pacific
28 Picke flavor
29 Ryan of films
31 Frankfurter
32 Camped out
33 Poi source
35 Salvo
36 Jerry's house
40 "the rub"
47 Namesake of a "Pierpaul"
48 "of Eden"
49 Navaho dwelling
53 Attempt
54 Inventor Eliza
56 -across
57 Top-notch
58 Sign
59 Miss West
60 Sixth sense
63 Covered

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

ACROSS
1 Oscar
5 NYC district
9 insignificant
14 One of five lakes
15 Baseball family name
19 Melville novel
17 Weston family
19 Division word
22 Cheekbone
25 River to the Baltic
27 Denver's state
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36 Jerry's house
40 "the rub"
47 Namesake of a "Pierpaul"
48 "of Eden"
49 Navaho dwelling
53 Attempt
54 Inventor Eliza
56 -across
57 Top-notch
58 Sign
59 Miss West
60 Sixth sense
63 Covered

Peace envoys probe reports of massacre in north Bosnia town

BANJA LUKA, Bosnia (R) — International mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen travelled to the northern Bosnian town of Banja Luka Friday to investigate reports of a Serb massacre of Muslims and rising ethnic tension there.

The two men travelled from the Croatian capital to Zagreb to the town of Okucani and then were driven with Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic the remaining 60 kilometres to Banja Luka.

Lord Owen, speaking to reporters in Okucani, described their one-day visit as a fact-finding mission.

Asked about reports of a Serb massacre on Aug. 21 of 200 Muslim men and youths, Lord Owen replied: "We want to find out what indeed happened."

According to the reports, the Muslims were shot dead by Serb police at a ravine outside the town of Travnik, about 140 kms (90 miles) south of Banja Luka, after they had been released from a detention camp.

Speaking to reporters in Zagreb, Mr. Vance said: "What we have heard in the recent couple of days has led us to real concern about what may be happening there."

Hundreds of soldiers, men and women, many of them making the pro-Serb three-fingered salute, lined the route as the two envoys were swept at high speed in Mr. Karadzic's official limousine through Serb villages to their destination.

Two MiG jets from the Yugoslav Federal Army swept low over the convoy, which included U.N. peacekeeping and Serb police vehicles, and then circled back.

Mr. Vance and Lord Owen, wearing civilian suits without any battle-gear, had talks in Banja Luka with the town's mayor and then met officials of the Muslim Party of Democratic Action.

Banja Luka, a key Serb military centre which also has a substantial Muslim and Croat population, has been the scene of rising tension in the past months with a growing number of bomb attacks and shooting incidents.

Mr. Karadzic, whose forces have laid siege to the capital Sarajevo and other key towns since April when Muslims and Croats voted for independence, said he was satisfied with his talks on Friday morning.

Reached by telephone from Belgrade, he said: "They could see for themselves that this is a peaceful town where almost 30,000 Croats and Muslims still live together."

"From now on we will invite them to come to check all these allegations so that rumours that threaten to jeopardise the London peace conference are stopped," he said.

The plight of Sarajevo's residents, trapped since April by the Serb siege, grew bleaker when the United Nations refugee agency said a resumption of an international airlift to the city remained highly doubtful.

The operation, which for two months ferried desperately needed food and medical supplies to the city, was suspended on Sept. 3 after an Italian transport plane was shot down by a missile outside Sarajevo over Muslim and Croat-controlled territory.

The UNHCR had held out the prospect of the airlift, a vital lifeline as winter approaches, re-

suming.

But UNHCR spokeswoman Sylvana Foa told a Geneva news briefing Friday that the situation around Sarajevo Airport was still dangerous and countries sending aid planes were reluctant to start operations again.

"The future of the airlift is very, very much in doubt still," Ms. Foa said. The 450,000 people in and around the city — under siege by rebel Serbs since April — faced "a very bleak winter indeed."

Even as she spoke, Serb forces pounded Muslim and Croat suburbs around Sarajevo Airport, with heavy mortar fire. Shelling and mortar fire was reported in the suburbs of Dobrinja and Stup and machinegun fire could also be heard at Vogosca, to the northwest.

Shells hurtled into two streets in the city in the morning, wounding 16 civilians, a hospital doctor said.

Reuters correspondent Paul Holmes, reporting from Mount Igman to the east of Sarajevo, said the mainly-Muslim Bosnian army was confident now that its forces could soon launch an offensive to break the Serb stranglehold on the city.

Senior officials pointed to recent successes in mountainous terrain east of the city as evidence their soldiers were now organised to strike back with superior manpower despite continued inferiority in heavy weapons.

Eight United Nations soldiers were slightly wounded in a mine blast while helping in an exchange of bodies between warring forces, a French U.N. officer said Friday.

The blast occurred Thursday at

a Bosnian government checkpoint near the capital of Sarajevo, said the officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Among the wounded were Canadian, British and Egyptian soldiers, said the officer. The most serious injury was reported to be a broken arm.

The U.N. armoured car the soldiers were travelling in struck the mine when the vehicle went onto the shoulder of a road to get around a barrier, the French U.N. officer said.

Meanwhile, the air force chief of rump Yugoslavia said Thursday that the country had powerful air defences and implicitly warned the West not to dare to launch a military strike.

Lieutenant-General Bozidar Stevanovic, commander of the Yugoslav Air Force and anti-aircraft defence, told a Belgrade daily newspaper that "Yugoslavia's anti-aircraft missile potential was huge, adding: 'We would be ready for it (foreign intervention) and respond effectively.'"

Gen. Stevanovic spoke to the daily Vecernje Novosti, which reflects the views of the headline Serbian leadership, only a few days after Yugoslav Prime Minister Milan Panic claimed he had narrowly averted foreign intervention against Belgrade last June.

Gen. Stevanovic said this threat had still not been removed, but was now "somewhat smaller."

"However, shifts of all kinds are possible overnight because the potential aggressors have ready forces which are sufficient to carry out such an attack even without special preparations."

S. African peace summit expected today

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's long-awaited peace summit between President F.W. de Klerk and ANC leader Nelson Mandela was expected to open in Pretoria Saturday, government sources said.

But Mr. De Klerk cautioned supporters at a National Party congress in Durban Friday that details were still being thrashed out and "absolute finality has not yet been reached."

He said however: "I am 95 per cent sure that the meeting will take place tomorrow."

Mr. Mandela telephoned U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali late Thursday to say obstacles to a summit had been overcome and a meeting was imminent.

Mr. De Klerk said the chief negotiators for the government and Mr. Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) were meeting in secret procedures.

Government sources said a letter from Mr. De Klerk to Mr. Mandela Thursday suggesting the release on parole of three guerrillas serving life sentences for killing white civilians had broken the deadlock on the summit after 18 days of negotiations.

Mr. De Klerk had invited Mr. Mandela to discuss political violence in which at least 2,500 people have died this year.

The ANC accepted the invitation on condition the government addressed its demands for the immediate release of political prisoners, banning dangerous weapons in public and fencing in migrant workers' hostels which have been flashpoints for black township violence.

Sources on both sides said the final sticking point in negotiations was the prisoners issue, with the ANC seeking the release in particular of the three men sentenced for killing white civilians in 1985.

Robert McBride, a mixed-race ANC guerrilla, was convicted of killing three white civilians in a bomb attack on a seafood Durban bar popular with police and soldiers.

Two blacks, Mzondeleli Nondula and Mthetheli Mabe, were imprisoned for killing three white farmers with landmines in the northern Transvaal.

Government sources said Mr. De Klerk had proposed the three be released soon on parole pending the adoption of legislation in a special parliamentary session next month covering the question of prisoners across the board, not just ANC members.

Several white rightwingers are also in prison for attacks on blacks.

The government also said it planned legislation to scrap some of the last vestiges of apartheid covering separate administration for various racial groups.

There have been heightened fears of further violence as the ANC and its main black political rival, the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party, vie for control of the tensing black townships.

The ANC also has announced plans to march on other homeland capitals.

Critics of Maastricht see multi-track Europe

BONN (R) — German Chancellor Helmut Kohl clung to his vision of a rapidly integrating European union Friday amid growing talks of a multi-track future for the European Community.

Mr. Kohl told parliament Europe needed to seize the opportunity the Maastricht Treaty presented and spoke up for the French franc against speculators trying to force its devaluation.

While Mr. Kohl argued for a broad and coordinated union of the EC's 12 members, a German central banker and the finance spokeswoman of the opposition Social Democrats (SPD) said the Community was bound to develop at different speeds.

Their comments followed warnings by EC Commission President Jacques Delors that some members might force ahead with their own integration if others delayed ratifying Maastricht.

Mr. Kohl said in his speech: "The government and I will do everything in our power in the coming weeks and months to have the Maastricht Treaty implemented as planned."

"If we do not now all use the opportunity the Maastricht Treaty offers, the Community will be thrown back by several years."

This week's Franco-German defence of the franc, which came under heavy pressure after French voters half-heartedly supported Maastricht, seemed to have ground speculators down. The franc traded at a six-week high Friday.

Wilhelm Noelling, who sits on the Bundesbank's Central Council, told a radio interviewer the treaty was already dead and EC member economies would progress at different speeds.

"I can't imagine that the Maastricht Treaty has even the slightest chance," said Mr. Noelling, head of the Hamburg Central Bank. "Such a large task can't be handled in one go."

The SPD's Ingrid Matthies-Maier said her party supported Maastricht but saw a multi-track route to a European union.

"I think the most probable thing is that one starts with a core monetary union of the most stable EC countries," she said. "It looks today like that would be Germany, France, the Benelux state and also Denmark if the Danes change their mind."

According to members of his Christian Social Union (CSU), Finance Minister Theo Waigel told a party meeting Thursday evening the EC would have to consider the possibility of a multi-track Europe developing.

At the same time in Brussels, Mr. Delors was warning a business meeting that member states that hesitated to ratify Maastricht could be left behind in the drive for more integration.

"If certain countries seek protection for holding back the application of the new treaty, I do not rule out that certain countries will take an initiative," he said.

"You cannot rule it out because they consider that in the world as it is, you cannot wait around for too long."

Chirac says Mitterrand should quit in March

PARIS (R) — Neo-Gaullist leader Jacques Chirac, the best-placed conservative to become France's next head of state, said Thursday President Francois Mitterrand should quit if his Socialist Party was trounced in parliamentary elections in March.

"If, as expected, the (centre-right) opposition scores a major victory in the forthcoming parliamentary elections, I believe morality and dignity should lead the president to draw the right conclusions," he said.

Asked via France's TFI television channel to say outright that he wanted Mr. Mitterrand to quit under the circumstances he described Mr. Chirac replied: "That seems obvious."

It was the first time that Mr. Chirac, or any other likely successor to Mr. Mitterrand, had called for the sitting president to resign before his term expires in 1995.

Opinion polls point to a crushing defeat for the Socialists in the March vote and it had been assumed that the centre-right parties would then uneasily share power with Mr. Mitterrand.

Mr. Chirac personally experienced such "co-habitation" with Mr. Mitterrand when an earlier centre-right parliamentary majority forced the president to appoint him prime minister in 1986.

Mr. Mitterrand, who will be 76 within weeks and was diagnosed this month as suffering from prostate cancer, turned the tables on Mr. Chirac afterwards by beating him in the 1988 presidential election and dismissing rightists from



Jacques Chirac

government.

Under the constitution, Mr. Mitterrand is not required to leave office in March no matter how badly his party fares in the parliamentary elections.

But Mr. Chirac compared Mr. Mitterrand's situation to that of President Charles De Gaulle, who resigned in 1969 after voters in a referendum rejected a constitutional reform he proposed. "Of course everyone is not General De Gaulle," he added.

Mr. Chirac, 59, now Paris mayor, is in a particularly strong position after reimposing his authority over the Rally For the Republic Party following a revolt in its ranks against ratifying the Maastricht Treaty on European union.

The party's ruling National Council, meeting at his request Wednesday after the French narrowly approved the treaty in a referendum, backed his leadership by a large margin.

U.S. rules out quick decisions on expanding Security Council

NEW YORK (R) — The United States has said it is willing to consider expanding the U.N. Security Council to include Germany, Japan and other states but the issue is extremely complicated and will take some time before any decisions can be made.

"Security Council reform is something the United States would certainly be prepared to consider," Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger told reporters at the start of a meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin.

"But the fact of the matter is when you try to analyse how you would do it, what changes would be made, it gets to be very very complicated," he said.

"So while we have great sympathy with those who argue there needs to be a change, when you try to figure out what you do about it, it becomes much more complicated. So in principle we think the whole issue probably deserves to be looked at but it will be a while before anybody can figure out exactly what the solutions are."

Security Council reform has become a constant theme in this General Assembly session, with Japan and Germany seeking seats as permanent members.

Brazil also was one of a number of regional powers seeking to play a bigger role on the Council,

which comprises five permanent members with veto power — the United States, Russia, Britain, China and France — and 10 non-permanent members serving two-year terms.

The economic giants Germany and Japan, and regional powers regard the Council's current composition as reflecting a power structure dating from the end of World War II. But the five permanent members have so far avoided any talk of reform.

On Thursday, President Suharto of Indonesia called for reform and expansion of the Security Council, warning that Non-Aligned states not be sidelined in shaping the post-cold war world.

Speaking on behalf of Non-Aligned nations, he voiced Third World perceptions of being pushed out of the mainstream now that many states, no longer had a strategic value in superpower politics.

The Security Council, he said, was one organ of the United Nations which should be expanded to accommodate new members, which if they are not to be given veto powers, should at least serve as permanent members.

Germany told the General Assembly Wednesday that while it would not push actively for a Security Council seat, if a change was considered it would want

one. Japan has also indicated that its economic strength merits a permanent seat.

Asked if economic strength was a credential for membership, Mr. Eagleburger said: "Nobody's quite decided what the criteria ought to be. I'm simply saying I think there is merit to taking a look at the issue but don't expect any quick or easy answers."

Meanwhile, Canada, which has offered to send 1,200 troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina, said Thursday the costs should be divided among all U.N. members instead of being left to the troop-contributing countries.

"This sets an unfortunate precedent and goes against the U.N.'s principle of collective responsibility," External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall said in a speech to the General Assembly.

"Canada is opposed to the recent decision of the Security Council to enlarge the mandate of UNPROFOR (U.N. Protection Force in the Former Yugoslavia) at an cost to the U.N., with the cost to be borne by the participating countries."

She was referring to a Sept. 24 Council decision to add at least 5,000 troops to the approximately 1,500 already serving in Bosnia-Herzegovina, without any additional expense by the United Nations.

Marcos found responsible for atrocities

HONOLULU, Hawaii (R) — A U.S. jury Thursday decided the late Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos was responsible for atrocities carried out by the military during his rule.

The jurors said Mr. Marcos' estate should pay damages to 10,000 plaintiffs in the civil suit brought by victims and relatives of those who suffered under his rule.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs had demanded a total of \$11 billion from the Marcos estate. Damages will be assessed in the second part of the trial, which is not due to be held for at least a month.

Philadelphia lawyer Robert Swift, lead counsel for the plaintiffs, presented evidence showing that during 14 years of martial law under Mr. Marcos more than 7,000 people were tortured, 2,500 executed and a further 750 are still listed as "missing."

Mr. Marcos died in exile in Hawaii in 1989 three years after he was toppled.

During the two-week trial Mr. Swift called more than 40 witnesses, some of whom testified on videotape.

Clinton 'planning team' prepares for White House

LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas (R) — Aides of Democrat Bill Clinton, cruising by 21 points ahead of President George Bush in polls, are already acting as if they will take command of the White House in January.

"It's not a transition office, it's a planning office," said Mickey Kantor, Mr. Clinton's national campaign chairman, who oversees the nine-person Clinton-Gore Planning Foundation, a separate organisation from the Arkansas governor's campaign.

The foundation occupies offices in a downtown Little Rock skyscraper a few blocks from the Clinton campaign headquarters.

Its sole function is to lay the groundwork for a Clinton presidency should the governor defeat the incumbent Republican president in the Nov. 3 election.

"It would be irresponsible not to plan for a transition," Mr. Kantor told Reuters. "This is serious business you've got to be diligent in your planning effort."

Mr. Kantor denied that polls showing the Democrat consistently leading Republican Bush were giving extra urgency to the process.

Virtually all presidential challengers assemble transition planning staffs, regardless of their odds of victory, he said.

"But this is more than tradition," Mr. Kantor added. "It is important work that has to be done."

The planning staff is primarily engaged in preparing for a transition of power and not actual government, he said.

"Basically, we're looking at

how the transition should be organised, what it should include, and what sort of administrative structure it should have."

The staff also hopes to give Mr. Clinton guidance on "possible personnel options" for a new administration, he said.

Mr. Clinton is opening a new campaign front focusing on health care, pitching himself as a "can-do" leader and brushing off Republican criticism as "foolish, negative doubt."

Mr. Clinton, campaigning in New York and New Jersey, pushed his plan to guarantee universal health care coverage and implement strict cost controls.

"My opponents are sowing doubt at every turn," Mr. Clinton told a crowd Thursday at Manhattan's Bryant Park. He said President Bush had written off America's chance of guaranteed health care and family leave for workers.

"I always thought that when people came to New York and saw the Statue of Liberty, they were coming here because this was a can-do country, not a can't-do country," Mr. Clinton said.

Later, Mr. Clinton hit the fund-raising circuit in New York, where aides said he collected \$4.3 million for the Democratic National Committee.

Mr. Clinton suggested to reporters Thursday that Mr. Bush was dodging presidential debates to avoid questions about his role in the Reagan administration's Iran-contra scandal.

Mr. Clinton didn't mention Iran-contra at the New York rally, but he jabbed at Mr. Bush

over the debates, saying the president was afraid to go "mano a mano" with him.

Iran-contra operative Richard Secord, meanwhile, disputed Mr. Bush's assertion that he didn't know about the Reagan White House's arms-for-hostages deals with Iran, telling the Associated Press that Mr. Bush had "not come clean."

Mr. Bush "was in on key decisions. There's simply no question about that. For him to suggest otherwise is simply not the case," Mr. Secord said.

"It's time for George Bush to come clean with the American people," said Mr. Clinton spokesman George Stephanopoulos. "What did Mr. Bush know and when did he know it? Why won't he tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?"

Mr. Stephanopoulos' remark mimicked Mr. Bush's comments earlier this week that Mr. Clinton "tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" about his draft record.

Clinton aides said the Democratic candidate was trying to bring the issue of the health care to the forefront of the campaign, on a par with such issues as jobs and the economy.

The Bush-Quayle camp was eager to engage.

"If they want to open up a new front, fine," said Bush campaign spokeswoman Torie Clarke. "Bill Clinton's been ducking this one for a long time. He doesn't want to talk about the taxes it will raise."

She said Mr. Bush's plan,

which creates a system of vouchers or tax credits under which low-income families would get help to get insurance, relies on "market forces and choice" to solve the nation's health-care crisis.

Mr. Clinton's plan would force employers to provide coverage for their workers. But it would also provide tax breaks for small employers hit with new costs — an answer to Mr. Bush's contention that Mr. Clinton's plan would hurt small businesses.

Meanwhile, Ross Perot, whose supporters have been urged to hear from the Bush and Clinton campaigns before prodding the Texas billionaire to re-enter the presidential race, already has decided to rejoin the campaign, a newspaper reported Friday.

The Los Angeles Times, citing unidentified sources, says Mr. Perot has decided "reluctantly" to get back into the contest after concluding that President Bush and Democratic nominee Bill Clinton won't tackle the nation's economic troubles.

The Perot announcement will come Monday during a scheduled appearance on CNN's Larry King Live, the newspaper said. Mr. Perot, who first suggested on Mr. King's programme that he would mount an independent candidacy, dropped out of the race in July.

On Thursday, members of Mr. Perot's staff were encouraging supporters to meet with the Bush and Clinton campaigns before pressing Mr. Perot to re-enter the race.

Protests greet Japanese in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH (AP) — Japanese soldiers, members of the first ground forces that country has deployed abroad since World War II, were met on arrival in Cambodia Friday by a half dozen protesters from their own country.

The demonstrators kept a low profile on the runway overflowing with more than 100 journalists, several U.N. officials and a handful of Japanese diplomats.

Miho Maeda, a 28-year-old activist from Tokyo, was incensed at the fanfare.

"Japan during World War II sent many troops to South East Asia, so many South East Asian people have a bad memory about Japan sending troops overseas,"

said Ms. Maeda, the group spokesperson.

She said many countries of South East Asia were worried Japan's participation in the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Cambodia would, over the years, be followed by a tidal wave of Japanese soldiers who would again seize control of the region.

"Japan is an economic power in South East Asia," she said, as workers unloaded U.N.-marked jeeps, bicycles, Japanese tea, mineral water and other supplies from the troop's C-130 aircraft. "From now on it will be an even stronger military power."

A 600-member engineering battalion, eight military observers

and 75 police are to take part in the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Cambodia.

The U.N. operation, the world body's largest and most ambitious ever, is to stabilise the country for elections by next May. About 40 countries already have contributed 22,000 personnel.

The commander of the engineering unit, Lt. Col. Takashi Watanabe, who flew in with three other soldiers, declined to comment on the protesters' charges. He said he was not in a position to answer such sensitive questions.

The only statement he gave was how he felt to have arrived for this historic mission: "It's a normal feeling."

later joined the group of rebels with swords, shovels, axes and choppers.

Reuters correspondents watched the battle from nearby but security men stopped them from taking photographs. An officer from the Rifles later showed them two bodies in a truck and 49 refugees arrested after suffering injuries.

A Bangladeshi local resident told Reuters he had seen five bodies being taken away while he was hiding in a ricefield.

As shooting ended at Dhmapalong Friday afternoon, hundreds of troops were still pouring out of their base at nearby Cox's Bazar to reinforce other refugee camps.

Police said the rebels used automatic weapons.

5 Burmese refugees killed in Bangladesh

DHUPALONG, Bangladesh (R) — At least five Burmese Muslims were killed in a clash with police and troops at a refugee camp in southeastern Bangladesh Friday, witnesses said.

Witnesses and police said a shootout began at Dhupalong camp after members of Burmese Muslim rebel groups infiltrated a crowd of refugees from the same region and attacked police.

"After about an hour of exchange of fire three policemen including an officer were injured," one witness said.

The witness said paramilitary troops of the Bangladesh Rifles were rushed in as the situation got out of control. "The riflemen opened fire and continued fighting for another one hour." No troops were reported wounded.

One police officer said refugees

Nigeria sets up revenue watchdog

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria's military government has set up a committee to monitor its revenue receipts, which come mainly from crude oil sales. Justice Minister Clement Akpangbo told state radio the committee, which includes officials from the oil ministry and the state oil company, would ensure that all receipts were properly accounted for and recorded.

COLUMN

Belgium plans ban on tobacco ads from 1995

BRUSSELS (R) — Belgium said it intends to outlaw all tobacco advertising in a ban which would come into effect in just over two years' time. "It's a total ban from January '95," an Environment Ministry spokeswoman told reporters. It would also cover the use of tobacco logos in events sponsored by the industry. In the meantime the government will force tobacco firms to put bigger health warnings on tobacco packets, the spokeswoman said. Belgium's ban has been drafted along the lines of a European Community proposal to remove tobacco advertisements from newspapers, billboards and cinema screens across the Community, she added. Italy and Portugal already have more limited bans and France is phasing one in soon.

Man gets life for making fake medicines

PEKING (AP) — A court has sentenced a Peking man to life in prison for leading a group of people involved in producing and selling fake medicines, official media reported Friday. The Peking People's Intermediate Court imposed the sentence against Xuan Jingnan, leader of a 10-person group that profited from making fake versions of a popular traditional Chinese medicine known as Ren-zuo Sedative Balm. The Xinhua News Agency reported. It said others involved in the scheme received jail sentences ranging from three to 15 years. Mr. Xuan and his accomplices had produced the fake medicines since 1984, earning 351,000 yuan (\$65,000) from the counterfeit products. Xinhua said. Chinese authorities recently began a crackdown on the production of fake and shoddy medicines, including one case in which two infants died after receiving injections of phony medicines. Earlier this month, official media reported that authorities had seized 5.5 million yuan (\$1 million) in counterfeit and substandard goods since early July